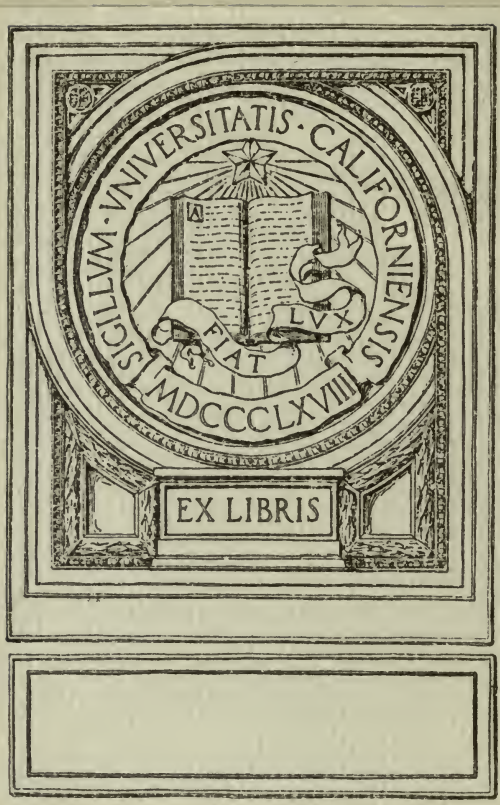
# CHATS ON MILITARY CURIOS

STANLEY C. JOHNSON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# CHATS ON MILITARY CURIOS

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

BRONZE MEDALLION OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

*Frontispiece.*

# CHATS ON MILITARY CURIOS

BY

STANLEY C. JOHNSON

M.A., D.Sc., F.R.E.S.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

WITH EIGHTY ILLUSTRATIONS

NEW YORK

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TO

G. M. J.

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# INTRODUCTION

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Preliminary considerations—Where to search for curios—What to search for—Specializing—Undesirable curios—The catalogue of the Royal United Service Museum—Public collections of military curios

FOR centuries past the collection of military curios has been the select pastime of men of title and soldiers of rank. Lately, however, owing to the War and the great spread of interest in all things pertaining to it, the circle of collectors has considerably widened, until to-day few things are more treasured by connoisseurs than the thousand and one souvenirs and emblems which emanate from our Army.

Most forms of collecting require the expenditure of much capital, but this is not one of the drawbacks which confront the seeker after military curios. For a few pence an old-fashioned bayonet can be picked up; a rifle bearing a date in last century will cost but a trifle more, whilst such odds and ends as badges and tunic buttons may be had for almost nothing.

Of course, a good deal depends on knowing where

to search for treasures. The old curiosity shops are capital hunting-grounds, but second-hand dealers who make a practice of buying up the contents of whole houses are even better. These people seem to get an accumulation of odd material which is difficult to classify, and therefore hard to sell. It is hidden away among these effects that the collector will probably alight upon his finest discoveries.

Some of our own experiences in the matter of bargain finding may be worth detailing. At Rag Fair, last Christmas, we were asked half a guinea for six perfect but very much begrimed medals, one of which was for the Defence of Lucknow. Needless to add, the set was worth many pounds when cleaned and fitted with fresh ribbons. On a stall in Farringdon Road we recently picked up a few helmet badges, some of which bore the old regimental numbers used prior to 1881, at twopence apiece. And elsewhere a few weeks back we chanced upon a bag full of military buttons, for which the dealer asked a shilling.

If we wish to form our collections quickly the best plan will be to get in touch with one of the first-class firms who regularly keep an exhaustive stock of military curios, and who can supply almost anything we need; but for our part we prefer to enter upon the work slowly and pick up treasures here and there at tempting prices. Doubtless there are capital hunting-grounds where bargains may be found in almost every town, but in London our favourite haunts are Rag Fair, held on Fridays in the Caledonian Meat Market; the stalls in Farringdon

Road, Hounsditch, and Middlesex Street; the shops in Praed Street; and, lastly, Charing Cross Road—the latter only for books and prints. Of course a good deal of material may be obtained cheaply by keeping an eye on the bargain advertisements found in certain newspapers. *The Bazaar, Exchange and Mart*, for instance, regularly contains notices of guns, medals, autographs, and such-like objects for sale, often at prices ridiculously low. It is thus clear that there is no lack in the sources of supply if only we can get in touch with them.

With many forms of collecting there is a certain sameness about the things collected which is apt to produce monotony: with military curios, however, the treasures cover so wide a field that no such drawback can exist. The following list will give a fair idea of the different objects which come within our present range:—

Medals, helmet and cap-badges, tunic buttons, armour pieces, firearms, weapons of all kinds as long as they have a military connection, medallions struck to celebrate military events, autographs of famous soldiers, original documents relating to army work, military pictures and prints, newspaper cuttings referring to military matters, obsolete uniforms including such fragments as sabre-taches, gorgets, epaulettes, etc., and, lastly, stamps and post-marks which have franked the correspondence of soldiers on active service.

The list is a somewhat lengthy one, and to endeavour to amass a representative collection of all the things enumerated would be a formidable task. It

is, therefore, much the wisest plan either to collect the above objects in a general way, specializing at the same time in two or three definite directions, or else to collect everything possible pertaining to one definite regiment. The latter method is, of course, the one which appeals most to army men and their immediate friends.

Those of us who elect to confine our attentions to regimental collecting should first procure a history of the regiment selected. From this work we shall then be able to find out what battles our chosen unit has fought in; what particular history it possesses; what noted soldiers have brought it fame; where it has been quartered from time to time; what customs specially belong to it; what changes have been made in its dress, and so forth. Such knowledge will afford us much help; it will teach us what objects to seek for and what to pass over. We shall not be led to search, say, for a Ghuznee medal if our chosen regiment was formed later than 1842, nor shall we hunt through the files of *The Times* for Wellington's dispatches concerning the Battle of Waterloo if our regiment took no part in the campaign.

There are one or two kinds of military curios which we should not attempt to collect. First, we should avoid all such large objects as take up more house-room than we can afford to spare them, and secondly, we should refrain from accepting objects the genuineness of which it is impossible to verify. Concerning this latter class, it may be appropriate to mention that we have never visited the battlefield of

QUEEN VICTORIA'S CHOCOLATE BOX SENT TO THE SOLDIERS FIGHTING IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1900.

PRINCESS MARY'S CHRISTMAS BOX SENT TO THE SOLDIERS FIGHTING IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM, 1914.

Waterloo without meeting a particularly eloquent man who always tells us that he has just had the good fortune to dig up some trophy or other of the famous fight. Naturally he is prepared to let us share in his good fortune, and consequently names a price for the article. Needless to say, the country of origin of the trophy is Germany, and the date of construction some time in the twentieth century. Probably, other battlefields besides the one at Waterloo are infested with unscrupulous curio vendors, so that the collector will be well advised if he refrains from purchasing any article unless properly authenticated—especially on battlefields.

In many branches of collecting comprehensive catalogues have been published which enable the student to classify, arrange, and price every piece among his treasures. With military curios, however, no such publications exist, but a very useful guide is the official catalogue issued by the Royal United Service Museum in Whitehall. The Museum itself is well worth frequent visits, for it is only by constant inspection of such exhibits as those displayed in this gallery that we can get to know of the existence of certain curios and of the shape, texture, and pattern of others. The Museum possesses particularly fine exhibits of medals, even of the earlier types; of uniforms, especially head-pieces; of regimental banners, and such weapons as swords and rifles.

The United Service Museum is by no means the only treasure-house of interest to collectors of military curios. The Tower of London, the Wallace Collection, and the Rotunda at Woolwich, each possess

much that is worth inspecting in the way of armour and weapons, whilst the British Museum has a collection of medals which is almost unique. The traveller on the Continent will find many instructive exhibits in the Musée d'Artillerie at Paris, the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam, and the National Museum at Copenhagen.

# II

# REGIMENTAL NOMENCLATURE

much that is worth inspecting in the way of armour and weapons, whilst the British Museum has a collection of medals which is almost unique. The traveller on the Continent will find many instructive exhibits in the Musée d'Artillerie at Paris, the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam, and the National Museum at Copenhagen.

II

# REGIMENTAL NOMENCLATURE

King's Army are therefore considerably above two hundred in number:—

HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY:

1st Life Guards.
2nd Life Guards.
Royal Horse Guards.

DRAGOON GUARDS:

1st Dragoon Guards (King's).
2nd Dragoon Guards (Queen's Bays).
3rd Dragoon Guards (Prince of Wales's).
4th Dragoon Guards (Royal Irish).
5th Dragoon Guards (Princess Charlotte of Wales's).
6th Dragoon Guards (Carabineers).
7th Dragoon Guards (Princess Royal's).

CAVALRY:

1st Royal Dragoons.
2nd Dragoons (Royal Scots Greys).
3rd King's Own Hussars.
4th Queen's Own Hussars.
5th Royal Irish Lancers.
6th Inniskilling Dragoons.
7th Queen's Own Hussars.
8th King's Royal Irish Hussars.
9th Queen's Royal Lancers.
10th Prince of Wales's Own Royal Hussars.
11th Prince Albert's Own Hussars.
12th Prince of Wales's Royal Lancers.
13th Hussars.

14th King's Hussars.
15th The King's Hussars.
16th The Queen's Lancers.
17th Duke of Cambridge's Own Lancers.
18th Queen Mary's Own Hussars.
19th Queen Alexandra's Own Royal Hussars.
20th Hussars.
21st Empress of India's Lancers.

ROYAL ARTILLERY.

ROYAL ENGINEERS.

GUARDS:

Grenadier Guards.
Coldstream Guards.
Scots Guards.
Irish Guards.
Welsh Guards.

INFANTRY:

(N.B.—Following each horizontal mark the old regimental nomenclature is appended. It will be seen that in many cases two of the old regiments were joined together to form one of the new.)

Royal Scots (Lothian Regiment)—1st or Royal Scots.
Queen's (Royal West Surrey)—2nd or Queen's Royal.
Buffs (East Kent)—3rd East Kent.
King's Own (Royal Lancaster)—4th or King's Own.

Northumberland Fusiliers—5th or Northumberland Foot Regiment.

Royal Warwickshire Regiment—6th or 1st Warwickshire Foot Regiment.

Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)—7th Regiment of Foot or Royal Fuzileers.[1]

King's (Liverpool Regiment)—8th or King's Regiment.

Norfolk Regiment—9th East Norfolk.

Lincolnshire Regiment—10th North Lincolnshire.

Devonshire Regiment—11th North Devonshire.

Suffolk Regiment—12th or East Suffolk.

Prince Albert's (Somersetshire Light Infantry)—13th or 1st Somersetshire.

Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire Regiment)—14th or Buckinghamshire Regiment.

East Yorkshire Regiment—15th Yorkshire (East Riding).

Bedfordshire Regiment—16th or Bedfordshire Regiment.

Leicestershire Regiment—17th or Leicestershire Regiment.

Royal Irish Regiment—18th or Royal Irish Regiment.

Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own (Yorkshire Regiment)—19th or 1st Yorkshire (North Riding).

Lancashire Fusiliers—20th or East Devonshire.

Royal Scots Fusiliers—21st or Royal North British Fuzileers.

Cheshire Regiment—22nd or Cheshire Regiment.

[1] The old spelling is retained.

BADGE OF THE QUEEN'S (ROYAL WEST SURREY REGIMENT) 2ND FOOT.

BADGE OF THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S (WILTSHIRE REGIMENT).

BADGE OF THE KING'S (LIVERPOOL REGIMENT).

BADGE OF THE ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT.

Royal Welsh Fusiliers—23rd or Royal Welsh Fuzileers.

South Wales Borderers—24th or Warwickshire Regiment.

King's Own Scottish Borderers—25th or King's Own Borderers.

Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)—26th or Cameronians; also Perthshire Volunteers.

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers—27th or Inniskilling Regiment.

Gloucestershire Regiment—28th or North Gloucestershire; also 61st or South Gloucestershire.

Worcestershire Regiment—29th Worcestershire; also 36th or Herefordshire.

East Lancashire Regiment—30th or Cambridgeshire Regiment; also 59th or 2nd Nottinghamshire Regiment.

East Surrey Regiment—31st or Huntingdonshire Regiment; also 70th or Glasgow Lowland Regiment.

Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry—32nd or Cornwall Regiment; also 46th or South Devonshire Regiment.

Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)—76th Regiment; also 33rd or 1st Yorkshire (West Riding Regiment).

(This is the only regiment named after a person not of royal blood.)

Border Regiment—34th or Cumberland; also 55th or Westmoreland Regiment.

Royal Sussex Regiment—35th or Sussex Regiment.

Hampshire Regiment—37th or North Hampshire; also 67th or South Hampshire.

South Staffordshire Regiment—38th or 1st Staffordshire; also 80th or Staffordshire Volunteers.

Dorsetshire Regiment—39th Dorsetshire; also 54th or West Norfolk.

Prince of Wales's Volunteers (South Lancashire Regiment)—40th or 2nd Somersetshire; also 82nd Regiment.

Welsh Regiment—41st Regiment of Foot; also 69th or South Lincolnshire.

Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)—42nd or Royal Highland Regiment; also 73rd Highland Regiment.

Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry—43rd or Monmouthshire Regiment; also 52nd or Oxfordshire Regiment.

Essex Regiment—44th or East Essex; also 56th or West Essex Regiment.

Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment)—45th or Nottinghamshire.

Loyal North Lancashire Regiment—47th or Lancashire Regiment; also 81st Regiment.

Northamptonshire Regiment—48th Northamptonshire; also 58th Rutlandshire.

Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Royal Berkshire Regiment)—49th or Hertfordshire Regiment; also 66th or Berkshire Regiment.

Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment)—50th or West Kent; also 97th or Queen's Own Regiment.

King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry)—51st or 2nd Yorkshire (West Riding).

King's (Shropshire Light Infantry)—53rd or Shropshire Regiment; also Bucks Volunteers.

Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment)—57th or West Middlesex; also 77th or East Middlesex.

King's Royal Rifle Corps—60th or Royal American Regiment.

Duke of Edinburgh's (Wiltshire Regiment)—62nd or Wilts Regiment; also Prince of Wales's Tipperary Regiment.

Manchester Regiment—63rd or West Suffolk; also 96th Regiment.

Prince of Wales's (North Staffordshire Regiment)—64th or 2nd Staffordshire; also 98th Regiment.

York and Lancaster Regiment—65th or 2nd Yorkshire North Riding Regiment; also 84th York and Lancaster Regiment.

Durham Light Infantry—68th or Durham Regiment.

Highland Light Infantry—71st and 74th Highland Regiment.

Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, The Duke of Albany's)—72nd; also 78th Highland Regiment.

Gordon Highlanders—75th Highland Regiment; also 92nd Regiment.

Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders—79th Regiment of Cameron Highlanders.

Royal Irish Rifles—83rd Regiment; also Royal County Down Regiment.

Princess Victoria's (Royal Irish Fusiliers)—87th or Prince of Wales's Own Irish Regiment; also 89th Regiment.

Connaught Rangers—88th Regiment or Connaught Rangers; also 94th Regiment.

Princess Louise's (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders)—91st Regiment; also 93rd Regiment.

Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians)—100th or His Royal Highness the Prince Regent's County of Dublin Regiment.

Royal Munster Fusiliers—101st or Duke of York's Irish Regiment; also 104th Regiment.

Royal Dublin Fusiliers—102nd Regiment.

Rifle Brigade—95th Regiment.

OTHER UNITS:

Royal Marine Artillery.

Royal Marine Infantry.

Army Service Corps.

Royal Army Medical Corps.

Army Veterinary Corps.

Army Ordnance Corps.

Army Pay Corps.

III

# REGIMENTAL CRESTS

## CHAPTER III

### REGIMENTAL CRESTS

The fascination of regimental crests—How to plan a collection of crests—The changes which crests undergo—The meaning of crests—Mottoes on crests, and their meanings

THE crest or badge worn by a soldier is probably one of his most cherished possessions, for it is at once the symbol of his regiment and the mascot which urges him on to fame and victory. It is but little wonder, then, that such emblems, so jealously preserved, should prove of deep interest to the collector of military curios.

In our own case, and we suppose it was much the same in those of our readers, army crests fascinated us long before we had a clear perception of what an army really was. In our early school-days, buttons bearing the various regimental devices attracted us; later our collection extended a welcome to cap-badges, whilst to-day it contains such treasures as the crests on waist-belts, crossbelt-plates, helmets, collar-plates, and even those on the metal flaps of sabretaches.

A collection of regimental badges should be planned on scientific lines, otherwise the treasured

possessions will lose much of their interest. In the first place, the various specimens should be classified: buttons should be arranged in one group, cap-badges in another, belt-plates in another, and so on.

The second grouping should be based upon the standing of the regimental unit. All the buttons worn by the regular army, for instance, should be placed in one sub-division; all those of the territorial army in another; and, as obsolete specimens are still procurable, sub-divisions should be reserved for the volunteer force, the old militia, and special forces which have been raised on special occasions.

Of course the badges should be arranged according to the precedence accorded to the regiments for which they stand; thus, in the case of the regular army, the Household Cavalry should receive priority and be followed by the Dragoon Guards; then the Cavalry of the Line should take third place, whilst the fourth and fifth places should be given to the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers. The Guards should be placed sixth, and the Infantry of the Line seventh. Badges of each of these divisions should then be arranged according to the seniority of the regiment. The Army List and the chapter on "Regimental Nomenclature" will give valuable help on this point. Finally, where regiments possess various badges for the different companies, these must be arranged in numerical order.

In planning a collection, it is well to remember that badges are constantly changing their patterns, not in fundamental ways, it is true, but in ways which are quite sufficient to add zest to the hobby

BADGE OF THE ROYAL DUBLIN FUSILIERS.
BADGE OF THE ROYAL FUSILIERS (CITY OF LONDON REGIMENT).
BADGE OF THE SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS (5TH BATTALION).
BADGE OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY.

of collecting. Battle honours, for instance, have been frequently added in the past, whilst many changes are sure to take place in the future, on this score alone, as a result of the great war with Germany. After the Boer War, additions were made to the scrolls which encircle many regimental badges, and the same may be said of the Peninsular, Marlborough's wars, and every great campaign in which the British Army has figured. Thus it is clear that a collection of devices such as we have here in mind is full of interest, not only from the military and antiquarian but also the historical point of view.

In addition to the gradual changes which have arisen, it must be mentioned that in 1881 the names of many regiments underwent changes and the badges suffered material alterations in consequence. Before the year in question, each army unit was known by its number and the crests bore distinguishing numerals. Thus the Wiltshire badge, which to-day depicts the Duke of Edinburgh's monogram within a circle, bore the figures "62" instead up till 1881. The collector will find these early devices of much interest, but, as a rule, they are fairly hard to obtain.

Unless the collector has ideas of his own as to how the badges should be mounted, it will be a capital plan to cover a board with black velvet and pin the medal emblems to it. When complete, the board should be framed with a moulding having a fairly deep rebate. The effect will be pleasing; the frame can be used as a wall ornamentation, and, what is most important, the badges themselves will be

protected, as far as possible, from the deteriorating influences of the atmosphere.

A study of the designs given on the crests forms, of course, an interesting pastime. Probably the first point which the student will notice is that certain specimens bear the King's sign—e.g. the King's Dragoon Guards and the Grenadier Guards—consequently, all such badges must inevitably suffer alteration on the demise of the reigning sovereign.

All royal regiments, with a single exception, bear the royal crown, though crowns of various types are borne by other units than royal ones.

Light infantry regiments invariably display a horn.

Grenades form part of the devices worn by the Grenadier Guards, the Royal Artillery, and the Fusilier regiments.

Most of the Irish units display the harp, and the Welsh the dragon, but in connection with this latter class, it must be mentioned that the Buffs (East Kent) are also proud of a dragon ; this, however, was given them for services rendered in China.

Britannia, one of our most cherished allegorical figures, is seen on but a single crest: that of the Norfolks. It was awarded to this unit for gallantry at Almanza in 1707. The Spaniards in the Peninsular War nicknamed the men of this regiment the "Holy Boys," as they mistook the figure of Britannia for that of the Virgin Mary.

A castle and key figure on many regimental devices. All those which display them fought at Gibraltar and received permission to incorporate

these objects in their crest in memory of the services which they performed there.

A striped rose forms part of a great many badges. It is a sign of the union after the War of the Roses.

Animals are favourite emblems. The lion, the symbol of our island race, naturally figures most frequently, but elephants, horses, tigers, and stags are great favourites.

It is not always possible to tell why such and such a regiment has chosen a particular animal for incorporation in its device, but, more often than not, the design may be traced back to the family escutcheon of a nobleman who had some hand in raising the unit. A case in point is the cat encircled by the motto *Sans Peur*, which the men of the 5th battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders wear on their caps. This creature has long ornamented the crest of the House of Sutherland, and the Sutherlands claim guardianship over this particular unit.

In other cases, an animal has been selected because it is specially appropriate. For instance, the Sherwood Foresters, soldiers who recall Robin Hood and the good old-fashioned chase, display an ambling stag, whilst regiments associated with long service in India have adopted an elephant or tiger.

But the most appropriate badge of all is that worn by the Royal Army Medical Corps. In this instance, we have a snake coiled around a rod. The snake, as every reader knows, was the particular mascot carried by Æsculapius, the god of healing, whilst the same reptile was used by Moses in the Wilderness to free

the Children of Israel from the ailments which proved so troublesome to them.

The fleeting horse, borne by the King's Own Hussars, the Fifth Dragoon Guards, and the Royal Fusiliers, is the white horse of Hanover, and was incorporated in the crests to remind us of services rendered against the Jacobites.

The Paschal lamb on the "Queen's" was the badge of Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II.

The sphinx, as every one knows, indicates special services in Egypt.

The mottoes incorporated in certain of the regimental crests are not without interest. The following, with their English equivalents, are worth noting :—

Pro rege et patria—For King and country.

Quis separabit?—Who shall separate?

Quo fata vocant—Whither fate calls.

Spectemur agendo—Let us be judged by our actions.

Nemo me impune lacessit—No one provokes me with impunity.

Nec aspera terrent—Difficulties do not terrify us.

Mente et manu—With mind and hand.

Pristinæ virtutis memores—The memory of former valour.

Viret in æternum—Flourishes for ever.

Quo fas et gloria ducunt—Where right and glory lead.

Vel exuviæ triumphant—Arms surely triumphant.

Semper fidelis—Always faithful.

SOME REGIMENTAL BUTTONS.

Virtutis namurcensis præmium—The reward of valour at Namur.

Omnia audax—To dare all.

Nisi Dominus frustra—Without God, it is vain.

Virtutis fortuna comes—Fortune the friend of valour.

Primus in Indis—First in the Indies.

Gwell angau na chyurlydd—Rather death than shame.

Aucto splendore resurgo—I rise with increased splendour.

Celer et audax—Swift and bold.

Cuidich'n Righ—Assist the King.

Faugh-a-ballach—Clear the way.

In arduis fidelis—In danger, faithful.

# IV

# MILITARY UNIFORMS

## CHAPTER IV

### MILITARY UNIFORMS

The growth of uniforms—The effect of the decline in armour on uniforms—The part played by Elizabeth—Uniforms in the time of the Civil War—In Charles II's reign—James II—The first two Georges—Uniforms in the Peninsular War—The close-fitting uniforms of George IV—The changes which were brought about in William IV's time—Later changes—Peculiarities of the military dress of to-day

ONE of the most interesting tasks which the collector of military curios can set himself is to trace out, by all available means, the growth of army uniforms from earliest times to the present day. In prosecuting such self-imposed work, the sources of information which will have to be studied are almost without limit, ranging from contemporary drawings, prints, statues, the writings of such chroniclers as Stowe, to, of course, the actual uniforms themselves. Our knowledge of the metamorphoses of military dress is very imperfect, and this research work will be all the more valuable in consequence.

At first thought it is a little surprising to learn that the earliest official mention of a distinguishing uniform for English soldiers occurs among the Ordinances of Henry VIII, but when we consider

that armour in various styles was largely used until Tudor times, the fact is not so striking. Isolated instances of uniformed soldiers can be traced before this period; Hannibal, we know, raised the famous white and crimson Spanish regiments, and then, of course, there were the Crusaders, who wore the ordinary clothes of the times, ornamented with crosses of distinctive colours.

With the decline of armour, retainers went into battle robed in the cloth liveries of their masters, whilst the mercenaries wore the usual dress of civilians. The drawback to such an arrangement was obvious. Men could never tell who were their friends and who their foes, and unnecessary slaughter was consequently committed. It was not long before leaders provided their followers with scarves of distinctive colours; sometimes they were appropriately chosen, at others they were merely distinctive. But even this plan gave little satisfaction, for our history books of the period are crowded with tales of men who donned the enemy's colours and were thus able to surprise their opponents.

As a result of these conditions, Henry VIII decided to clothe some, at least, of his soldiers in distinctive uniforms; he selected white coats emblazoned with the red cross of St. George. Speaking of other soldiers of this reign, probably later levies, Stubbs remarks that the doublets which they wore "reached down to the middle of the thighs, though not always quite so low, being so hard quilted, stuffed, bombasted, and sewed as they can neither work nor yet well play in them, through the ex-

A HORSE AMULET BEARING THE DEVICE OF THE ROYAL FUSILIERS.

HELMET PLATE OF THE ROYAL MARINE LIGHT INFANTRY.

cessive heat and the stiffness thereof. Therefore are they forced to wear them loose about them. They are stuffed with four, five, or six pounds of bombast at the least, and made of satin, taffeta, silk, grograine, gold, silver, and what not." From the antiquarian's point of view this dress must have indeed proved attractive, though the soldier of to-day will hardly recognize any redeeming features in it.

Elizabeth, as all students of history know, paid great attention to dress; not only in matters concerning her own person, but also in those affecting her Court and followers. Accordingly, we find that a decree, ordering a body of Lancashire men to be raised for service in Ireland, stated that "the soldiers shall be given convenient doublets and hose and also a cassock of some motley or other sad green colour or russet; also every soldier to have five shillings to provide a mantle in Ireland besides his livery coat."

Another interesting quotation, taken from Lawrence Archer's "British Army Records," mentions Sir John Harrington as stating that an officer's kit in Elizabeth's time consisted of—

1 cassock of broad cloth.
1 canvass doublet with silk lining and buttons.
2 shirts.
2 bands.
3 pairs of stockings at 2s. 6d. each.
3 pairs of shoes.
1 pair of Venetians with silver lace (i.e. trousers).

When the Civil War broke out, the Royalists or

Cavaliers wore a very picturesque though hardly serviceable uniform ; it consisted of a doublet of silk, satin, or velvet with large loose sleeves slashed up the front, the collar covered by a falling band of lace, whilst a short cloak was carelessly worn on one shoulder. Long breeches tucked into boots, the uppers of which were loose and curled over,[1] added to the picturesque appearance of the warriors. A Flemish beaver, with a distinctive hatband and an elaborate feather, was the usual headgear. The silk doublet, it should be added, was often replaced by a buff coat in war-time.

The Commonwealth, of course, brought sober clothing which, at least, was more protective and useful than that associated with the Tudor and Stuart periods.

In Charles II's time the military uniform, as we know it to-day, began to materialize. It is true that during the early part of Charles's reign the soldiers wore the pre-Commonwealth styles, but when the King began to form certain regiments, which still exist at the present moment, a need for definite uniforms became manifest. Thus, in 1661, the Earl of Oxford raised the Horse Guards and provided them with a picturesque blue uniform, and in 1665 the Third Buffs was formed and soon earned for itself this distinctive name as its accoutrements were fashioned from buffalo leather.

James II introduced few changes. It is worth mentioning, however, that wigs became fashionable

[1] Apparently this slovenly looking boot was used in order to prevent the leg from being crushed in a battle charge.

in this period, and large hats adorned with waving feathers were worn to suit the style of coiffure. Sewn into the crown of these hats, skull caps made of iron were frequently found.

In 1695, according to a contemporary authority, the coats and breeches of the sergeants and ordinary soldiers were, in most cases, grey, whilst the coats of drummer boys were purple. The shape of these costumes followed the civilian styles of the period.

When Anne came to the throne, armour which had not been entirely abolished completely died out, and the foot soldiers wore a comfortable scarlet coat with distinctive facings, a cocked hat, breeches, and long black gaiters reaching just above the knees, with a strap below the knee to hold them in position. The cavalry also wore a cocked hat and large boots. Some officers wore a wide-brimmed hat, turned up on two sides and decked with gay feathers.[1]

The first two Georges introduced many ideas from abroad, the most striking of which was the mitre helmet, worn even to-day by certain Central European regiments. The men who were provided with this headgear were certainly picturesque in appearance; the Royal Fusiliers, for instance, wore a high mitred helmet, elaborately ornamented with regimental devices, a long tail coat, buttoned back at the front in a way which is reminiscent of the present French infantry, knee breeches, cloth leggings, and a plain bandolier carrying a bag, much after the fashion of a sabretache. With the exception of his hat, which was clumsy and gave no protection either against

[1] Luard, "A History of the Dress of the British Soldier," p. 94.

weather or onslaughts, his uniform was comfortable though weighty.

George III discarded the low boots and leggings for knee-boots, but these were soon given up for low boots and long trousers. The buttons on the uniform of the Heavy Dragoons, also, were replaced by hooks and eyes, whilst the Light Dragoons lost nearly all theirs. In addition, their helmet was replaced by a felt shako. Curiously enough, the Hussar, who wore five rows of heavy buttons on his jacket and five more rows on the little pelisse which he slung loosely over his left arm, was allowed to keep all his cumbersome ornamentation.

The Peninsular War brought many changes, but these were more variations of the set styles than complete alterations in shapes and colours, probably the result of requiring large quantities of outfits for the war, in the quickest possible time. Luard, writing of this period, says[1]: "The officers of the Army of the Peninsula ran into great extremes of fashion; and as there was a difficulty, frequently, in procuring articles of dress exactly according to regulations, considerable latitude was of necessity granted. An officer of the 4th Dragoons, who was very fond of being gaily dressed, was always searching for silver lace, and whenever he went into a town and returned to the camp, on being questioned regarding what articles of food were to be procured, invariably answered: 'I don't know, but I found some silver lace.'"

Directly following the Napoleonic Wars it was felt

[1] Luard, "A History of the Dress of the British Soldier," p. 102.

prudent for the sake of peace to garrison a British Army of Occupation in France. Four cavalry regiments crossed the Channel, the 9th, 12th, 16th, and 23rd Light Dragoons being selected.

The dress which these soldiers wore was a jacket similar to that of the ordinary Light Dragoons, but with the addition, for the officers, of an embroidered cuff and collar, a pair of enormous epaulettes, and an aiguillette. The cap was very high with a square top, made of cane covered with cloth of the colour of the facings of the regiment, a brass plate in front and a plume at the top of it. The privates' dress corresponded to that of the officers, but brass scales were worn on the shoulders instead of epaulettes. The Cossack shape of trousers was worn by the officers, very full around the waist but gradually tapering down to the foot.[1]

George IV, as is popularly known, gave much thought to matters of dress. He held that wrinkles in a uniform entirely spoiled all appearance of correct military bearing. The soldiers of his time were therefore expected to put on their clothes and have all fullness cut out. Luard says that the consequence was that the coats of the privates, as well as those of the officers, were made so tight that freedom of action was much restricted, and the infantry could with difficulty handle their muskets, whilst the cavalry could scarcely do sword exercise.

There is no doubt that, though the uniforms of this date were uncomfortable, they were of a smart and attractive appearance. The officers in the Rifle

[1] Luard, "A History of the Dress of the British Soldier," p. 106.

Corps, for instance, wore a tight-fitting green outfit with silver facings, relieved by a bright scarlet belt. The boots were of black leather, and reached almost up to the knees. The hat was somewhat like the Highland bonnets of to-day. The officers in the 10th Hussars were a trifle more showy in appearance. They had a blue coat with gilt-braided plastron, and a pelisse on the left arm. The trousers were red and skin-tight, and fastened under the instep to keep them from creeping up the leg. The hat was a shako surmounted by a large dark plume. In the 1st Foot Guards the officer's coat was red, and had tails; there were epaulettes on the shoulders and a white bandolier across the breast. The hat was a high-decked shako of glossy material.

William IV's reign was marked by the rise and subsequent decline of enormous bear-skins. William also decreed that the whole of the Army, with the exception of the artillery and riflemen, should be dressed in scarlet, the national colour.

When Victoria came to the throne she restored the blue dress to the Light Dragoons, but not to the Lancers nor to the 16th Regiment. The Household Cavalry were given helmets with weeping plumes fixed to the apexes. A little later "pill-boxes" became fashionable amongst the majority of the regiments.

In 1881 most of the distinctive and, in many cases, historic facings were taken from the various regiments, and blue was given to the Royal regiments and white to the others. The change seems to us, who look at the matter in the light of the antiquarian

and historian, as a retrograde one, which should be deprecated in every way.

To-day all the regiments of the regular British Army wear scarlet uniforms, with the following exceptions :—

1. *Blue Uniforms*—Royal Horse Guards; 6th Dragoon Guards; King's Own Hussars; Queen's Own Hussars; Royal Irish Lancers; King's Irish Hussars; Queen's Royal Lancers; Prince of Wales's Own Hussars; Prince Albert's Own Hussars; Prince of Wales's Royal Lancers; 13th, 14th, 15th, 18th, 19th, and 20th Hussars; 17th and 21st Lancers; Royal Artillery; Royal Marine Infantry; Army Service Corps; Royal Army Medical Corps; Army Veterinary Corps; Army Ordnance Corps; Army Pay Corps.
2. *Green Uniforms*—Cameronians; King's Royal Rifle Corps; Royal Irish Rifles; Rifle Brigade.

In the above notes we have merely given a rough sketch of the growth of the military uniform as it has affected the British soldier. To elaborate this information by tracing the various changes, both great and small, which have been applied to army clothing is a work of intense interest and historical value. The task is best undertaken by the curio collector, who can build up the necessary knowledge from his self-made collection of military prints, illustrated books, photographs, and actual uniforms. We do not suggest that any one reader should undertake the whole task himself; it is far better to select a

particular regiment or a class of regiment, or even a particular article of dress, and trace its history with minute precision. The results achieved in this way would indeed prove valuable.

Before concluding this chapter the following questions bearing on military dress may prove of interest; they are typical of the thousand and one queries which the student should ask himself:—

1. Why do the drummers in the Guards wear fleurs-de-lys on their tunics?

2. Which regiments still wear black in memory of Wolfe?

3. Why do the Northumberland Fusiliers wear a red and white feather hackle in their caps?

4. Why does the Gloucester Regiment wear a badge on both the back and front of their hats?

5. Why has the "flash" survived with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers?

6. Why does the privilege exist with the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry of wearing shirt collars with the uniform?

UNIV. OF
IFORNIA

A SLEEVE FROM A COAT OF THE OLD 2ND
(SOUTH MIDDLESEX) VOLUNTEER REGIMENT.

A BELT BUCKLE FROM THE SAME REGIMENT.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

# V

# ARMOUR

# CHAPTER V

## ARMOUR

The scarcity of good armour — Considerations for the collector — Counterfeit armour—The twelve periods in armour—The characteristics of each period—Glossary

THERE is much that is fascinating in the study of armour, and the seeker after military curios will do well to consider the advisability of making a collection of armour pieces. In praise of this particular form of treasure-hunting we could write a good deal, but, as space is necessarily limited, it will be wise to content ourselves, at the outset, with stating the drawbacks rather than the advantages which attend this hobby.

In the first case, really good complete suits of period armour are scarce, and consequently command enormous sums. Of course there is no reason why detached pieces should not be collected: these can be obtained freely and at reasonable prices. Probably the best bargains are to be had at country-house sales, where the specimens are not sufficiently numerous to warrant the attendance of London dealers. But the smaller bric-à-brac shops, especially

those off the beaten track, often contain oddments which may be picked up at tempting prices.

The second drawback concerns questions of space. Armour collecting takes up a good deal of room and, in these days of small suburban houses and town flats, it is not every one who can house such treasures without causing them untold damage.

The third point is the most serious of all; it may be stated briefly. There are so many dangerous forgeries to be met with that the untutored collector may become bewildered and so lose his love for the hobby.

Upon the Continent there are thriving factories where armour, of the rarest kinds, is imitated, not for sale as reproductions but in order to cheat the uninitiated. The antique appearance is imparted to the bright metal surfaces by artfully smearing with lithographic ink and then dabbing with muriatic acid. The ink protects the parts which it covers from the corrosive action of the acid, and when the metal is subsequently washed and greased it has the exact appearance of an aged piece of armour, eaten and worn by time. How is the amateur to detect such worthless specimens when he runs across them?

Under the title of "Forgeries that were not Forged," *The Connoisseur*,[1] a few years ago, made some very pertinent remarks on this subject. "Foreign museums are not entirely free from the presence of forgeries," the article began; "in Paris may be seen suits and parts of suits which will

[1] May 1901, p. 36.

not satisfy the connoisseur in the matter of freedom from faking. At Berlin at least one suit will strike the observer as decidedly not what it claims to be. At Stockholm, among the interesting objects in the Lifrustkammer are many pieces which one regrets are not real. And if in public collections many pieces arouse scepticism, how much more so is it the case with private collections, where all the geese are swans.

"In the Tower of London, on the upper shelf of one of the cases, is a row of helms and helmets described as copies or trophy work. These certainly exemplify the expression 'forgeries that were not forged.' They were bought for the National Collection between the years 1851 and 1858, and were then no doubt considered valuable examples of ancient armour. One, indeed, figured at Manchester in 1857 among the treasures of art. In them we may observe every rule of the construction of real armour violated, and further insulted by artificial rust and injuries.

"It may be asked, in the words of the song, 'How shall I my true love know?' and seeing how much more trouble is taken to deceive than to detect deceit, it is difficult to lay down any complete system of defence for the collector from the ever-increasing attacks of the forger." It is certain, however, that the best way of detecting forgeries is to get acquainted with the styles of armour that were worn at certain periods, to find out what processes were available for constructing the armour at these periods, what uses each section of the armour was put to, and how it was fitted on to the rest of the suit.

Of course, a good deal may be learnt from visits

to public collections. The uninitiated collector is, therefore, advised to study the specimens shown in the Tower, the Royal United Service Museum, the Wallace Collection, and the Rotunda at Woolwich. On the Continent there are many fine displays, not only of armour but also of weapons, notably at the Musée d'Artillerie, Paris, the Industrial Museum of Vienna, the Copenhagen National Museum, and the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam. These are all well worth inspecting.

Having discussed matters concerned with the collecting of armour, we will now turn to questions relating to the actual armour itself.

Armour may be conveniently divided into twelve periods, as follows[1]:—

I. Pre-Norman.
II. Norman period to 1180.
III. The Chain Mail Period, 1180–1250.
IV. Chain Mail Reinforced, 1250–1325.
V. The Cyclas Period, 1325–35.
VI. The Studded and Splintered Armour Period, 1335–60.
VII. The Camail and Jupon Period, 1360–1410.
VIII. The Surcoatless Period, 1410–30.
IX. The Tabard Period, 1430–1500.
X. The Transition Period, 1500–25.
XI. Maximilian Armour, 1525–1600.
XII. The Half-Armour Period, after 1600.

[1] There are various ways of classifying armour, but we have here followed (Class I excepted) Ashdown in "British and Foreign Arms and Armour."

Armour
Headgear
Heaume
15th. Century.
Bascinet.
14th Century.
Burgonet.
15th. Century.
Simple
Salade.
15th Cent.
Morion
16th. Century.
Pot-Helm.
17th Century.
Salade with
mentonnière
15th. Century.
Casque.
with nose
piece. (Bayeux
Tapestry.)
Heaume
14th Century.
Bascinet
with Visor.
14th Century.

**The Pre-Norman Period** is, in reality, composed of a number of preparatory eras which paved the way for the Norman period, the first to use complete suits of protective covering. The Greeks with their Bœotian helms and cuirasses, the Romans with their "skull-cap" helmets, the Saxons and Danes with their head, chest, and leg coverings, all led up to the armour as we see it depicted by the Bayeux Tapestry. This period is of little interest to collectors, as specimens are quite unobtainable.

**The Norman Period** introduced the peculiar but distinctive helmet, conical in shape and provided with a nose protection or "nasal." The body covering was worn from head to toes, the feet and legs being enveloped in "chausses" made of a pliable substance provided with a generous supply of metal studs. The shield was, of course, an important feature of the Norman dress; it was more or less heart-shaped, and bent so as to fit round the body.

**The Chain Mail Period.**—Between 1180 and 1250 the armour suit underwent considerable changes. The Norman conical helmet gave place to the heaume, which usually had a flat surface, squared at the top, curved lines under the chin, and peep-holes or ocularia in front. A surcoat or tunic, without sleeves, which was fitted over the usual armour, was also a feature of this era. But, of course, the introduction of chain mail was the outstanding point of interest.

**Chain Mail Reinforced.**—This period saw the gradual introduction of heaumes with curved crowns, often bearing ornamental devices, of ailettes to protect the

A FLINT-LOCK PISTOL.

THE ACTION PART OF THE ABOVE.

shoulders and neck, of banded mail, and of chain mail reinforced with sections of plate.

**The Cyclas Period.**—"Probably at no time in the history of defensive armour," says Ashdown,[1] "has it presented a more picturesque appearance than during the brief ten years of the Cyclas Period. Fitting closely to the figure, the various garments followed the outlines of the human form, and in no parts showed any marked peculiarities or eccentricities. The evolution of the style was undoubtedly derived from the experience gained during the Chain Mail Period, when that defence was proved to be ineffectual against the terrible effects of lance and sword. Both of these weapons, even if they did not actually pierce the mail, either bruised the body or broke bones, and thereby incapacitated the wearer; while the protection afforded by the loosely hanging folds of the surcoat of previous periods, especially against sword-cuts, had been duly noted. Hence, during the Cyclas Period we meet with the introduction of multitudinous coverings, whereby the lance, the sword, and the arrow were opposed by plate and mail, and by various padded garments of a textile nature."

**The Studded and Splintered Armour Period.**—This form of armour directly owes its introduction to the conflicts between the English and French, and the ideas for improvement which were prompted by actual experience on the battlefield. The style was none other than a piecing together of the best features of chain mail, plate, and cuir-bouilli. The

[1] "British and Foreign Arms and Armour," p. 139.

bascinets of this time were unusual, having much the appearance of metal hoods, provided or not provided with visors. The surcoat and the chausses were essential features of the period.

**The Camail and Jupon Period.**—This is probably one of the most interesting and picturesque periods in the history of armour. The headgear was usually pointed and fitted down closely over the ears, but left the face free. Laced to the helmet and falling over the shoulders was a plastron of camail which protected the throat and neck from violence. The jupon was a garment which covered the body from the camail to just above the knees. It consisted of whatever material the wearer thought was the most impervious to blows, with, usually, a velvet covering, embroidered with a heraldic device.

**The Surcoatless Period** is easily recognized, as it was the earliest period in which a full set of armour was worn with no textile covering placed over it.[1] A feature of note was the loss of the camail throat-guard and the introduction of a light sheet-metal gorget. The camail was, undoubtedly, an efficient safeguard, but it was extremely weighty and so caused much inconvenience to the wearer.

**The Tabard Period** saw the introduction of many changes, which had for their object the greater protection of the armoured soldier; but the most distinguishing feature was the arrival of the tabard, a kind of sleeved surcoat, which covered the wearer down to the knees. It was of no fighting value, but gave dignity to those who displayed it. The

[1] Ashdown, "British and Foreign Arms and Armour," p. 194.

salade also belongs to this period, both those with and those without visors, as well as the pauldron, a protection for the elbow, and the palette, which shielded the underneath portion of the shoulder-joint.

**The Transition Period** brought helmets which, by reason of their movable visors, cheek-pieces, and mentonnières, gave greater safety to the head. But the period is more readily distinguished by the mail skirt, which was worn suspended from the waist. Of this period Ashdown writes: "Very important alterations occurred in armour of this period, differentiating it from that of the preceding. The great pauldrons, exaggerated coudières, and general angularity, and one might almost say prickliness, of the later Tabard Period was modified to a smoother and rounder style, while it lost entirely that remarkable beauty of form which, however much distorted by fanciful additions, characterized the Gothic armour as a whole. The beautiful flutings and ornamental curves disappeared to make way for a heavy, cumbersome style indicative of German stolidity, and in direct antagonism to the mobile quickness and agility suggested by the majority of suits dating from the latter half of the previous century."[1]

**Maximilian Armour.**—With the gradual employment of gunpowder even the best kinds of armour lost their military value, and, consequently, the sixteenth century saw a decline in the use of steel suits for purposes of warfare. There was no reason, however, why steel-clad men should not continue to be seen

[1] "British and Foreign Arms and Armour," p. 270.

at tilting tournaments, even though the arquebus had proved its value in dealing death and destruction. Consequently we find that armour was still used during this century at these functions of chivalry, and it was the kind favoured by Emperor Maximilian which was mostly worn—hence the name. Its outstanding features were excessive ornamentation and artistic finish.

**The Half-Armour Period.**—This is the period during which steel dress was gradually dying out. "The period exhibits a brutal strength and crudity in armour which forcibly suggests boiler-plate work. The defences were simply made to cover the vital parts of the body with the maximum amount of efficiency, without any consideration whatever for gracefulness of outline or beauty of surface."[1] The metal covering of these times was obviously fashioned with the idea of making a compromise between protection and mobility, and it gradually dwindled until the head alone was safeguarded.

So passed away the armour which, as James I once said, was a very useful invention, for it saved not only the wearer from being killed, but it was so hampering that it prevented him from killing any one else.

Many technical terms are used in armoury which need explaining. The following are those which occur most frequently:—

**Barded.**—A horse fully armoured.

[1] Ashdown, "British and Foreign Arms and Armour," p. 313.

**Bascinet.**—A helmet which protected the back of the head and neck.

**Brassarts.**—Plate armour for the upper part of the arm, reaching from the shoulder to the elbow, sometimes in a single piece, sometimes in a series of overlapping plates.

**Brigandine.**—Armour worn at one time by brigands—hence the name. It consisted of a foundation of quilted leather, upon which was sewn a number of small metal plates, and thus formed a good defence for the body against the sword and the pike.

**Burgonet.**—A fifteenth-century helmet, usually round to fit the head, but provided with a peak to protect the eyes.

**Cabasset.**—Like the morion, it was a simple metal hat with a dome-shaped crown and a brim. It had no visor, gorget, neck-guard, etc.

**Chain Mail.**—A covering which consisted of an endless number of rings laced one into the other. Each ring had four others threaded into it. The individual rings were known as "grains d'orge."

**Chamfrien.**—The metal covering for a horse's face; often provided with a spike.

**Chausses.**—The metal leggings used in armour.

**Corslet.**—A suit of armour worn chiefly by pikemen. The word was used, not only to denote the body covering but the whole outfit from head to knees.

**Coudière.**—An elbow guard.

**Crinière.**—A number of plates hooked together to guard a horse's neck; it rested on the mane.

**Cuirass.**—Armour for the breast and back, consisting of two plates united at the sides of the body. They were originally fashioned out of leather (*cuir* = leather).

**Espalière.**—Covering for the shoulders and the upper part of the arm.

**Gauntlet.**—The protection used for covering the hands.

**Genouillière.**—Flexible knee pieces with joints reminiscent of those possessed by lobsters.

**Gorget.**—A protection for the throat; it also sustained the weight of the whole armour outfit.

**Greeves.**—Plate armour for the legs.

**Haubergeon.**—A coat made probably of plate or chain mail but without sleeves.

**Hauberk.**—This was a complete covering of mail from head to foot, consisting of a hood joined to a jacket, with sleeves, breeches, stockings, and shoes of double chain mail, to which were added gauntlets.

**Heaume.**—A head covering, introduced in the Chain-mail period. (See p. 75).

**Hufden.**—A head piece which fitted closely round the skull; it was worn by archers in Queen Elizabeth's time.

**Jazeran.**—A hauberk which was covered with overlapping plates.

**Mentonnière.**—A portion of the head piece which protected the chin and the lower part of the face.

**Morion.**—See Cabasset.

**Ocularium.**—The peep-hole of the helmet.

**Palette.**—A shield or covering used to protect the arm and shoulder-joint.

THE BARREL OF A GUN ORNAMENTED WITH A TWIN HEAD OF MINERVA.

AN OLD POWDER-FLASK.

**Pauldrons.**—Pieces of armour for the shoulders ; the origin of epaulettes.

**Plate mail.**—This consisted of a number of small lamenæ of metal, commonly iron, which were so arranged as to slightly overlap like the scales of a fish. Usually a leather foundation was provided.

**Poitrinal.**—The covering for a horse's hindquarters ; a guard against sword slashes.

**Pot.**—A cabasset or morion.

**Rerebrace.**—A protection for the part between the elbows and shoulders.

**Rondelle.**—A guard for the inner side of the arm which wields the weapon.

**Salade.**—A light casque, sometimes provided with a visor, but without crest.

**Sollerets.**—Overlapping plates which formed the shoe of an armed knight. Cf. Chausses.

**Tapul.**—The perpendicular ridge down the middle of a breastplate.

**Targe.**—A shield.

**Tassets.**—A series of flexible plates hooked to the skirt of the cuirass, protecting the thighs.

**Visor.**—The movable face-guard of a helmet.

# VI

# WEAPONS

## CHAPTER VI

### WEAPONS

Buying specimens—Storing them—Hand culverins—The serpentin—The wheel-lock—The flint-lock—The rifle—Swords—The effect of armour on swords—Swords with historical associations—Other weapons

Of all the antiques which are to be found in an average bric-à-brac shop there is probably nothing upon which the dealer is so ignorant as the class of military curio which comes under the head of weapons; as a consequence, we find that the ruling prices for these relics of the battlefield are either excessively dear or ridiculously cheap.

There is nothing in this state of things to cause the collector of weapons to grumble, for if he be wise he will add to his treasures when a bargain is to be had, but not when specimens are dear. The process makes collecting a somewhat slow business, but it enables us to get together a whole host of interesting things at a very small cost.

A few weeks ago the writer spent an afternoon in going round to the antique shops in a certain quarter of London. Here are some of the prices which he was asked, and which he considers were out of reason.

For a rifle used by Kruger's men, £5; worth at the most half this sum. For a rifle and bayonet said to have been used at Waterloo, £1. For a sixteenth-century sword, 5s. The sword was so heavy that it would have almost fetched this price as old metal. For an eighteenth-century flint-lock, not in good condition, £20. Needless to add, that while the writer was not impelled to purchase the flint-lock, he snapped up the sword eagerly.

The collector of weapons must be very careful how he stores his treasures. To leave, say, a bayonet where it can be handled by children is almost a criminal act; to buy a firearm and not examine the charging chamber immediately is, if anything, a trifle more unscrupulous. Thoughtlessness has accounted for a good many tragedies, and so it ought to be the determination of the curio-hunter to see that his treasures are stored out of harm's way. Swords, bayonets, rifles, and other lengthy weapons are conveniently kept on the walls of living-rooms, and if placed horizontally and fairly high up are safe and ornamental. Smaller things, such as daggers and pistols, are better preserved in glass cases. Steel implements which, when exposed continuously to the air, are apt to deteriorate, should be carefully cleaned and then coated with a thin layer of copal varnish. If the varnish be painted on sparingly and no patches are left uncoated, the metal will remain bright permanently, and only require an occasional dusting. If the specimen which is to be treated is rusty, it should be carefully gone over previously with emery, but should it have a chased, engraved,

A SOUTH AFRICAN POM-POM SHELL AND A MARTINI-HENRI CARTRIDGE.

CARTRIDGES AS USED IN THE GREAT WAR.

(From left to right: German, French, Belgian, and British.)

or damascened surface, it will be advisable to soak it in benzine for a week or more, and then give it a rubbing until a sufficient polish has been obtained.

Of the weapons with which we shall deal in these pages, probably firearms are the most interesting. Such implements have been in use among armies for many centuries, but as cannon and other large pieces possess little interest for the collector, on account of their size, it will be convenient to omit the earliest firearms and speak first of hand culverins.

This weapon consisted of a small tube of $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ in. internal diameter, fixed to a straight piece of wood or welded to an iron handle. At the close of the fifteenth century it was extensively employed. In 1471 culverins were in the army of Edward IV, after his landing at Ravenspur, Yorkshire. The smallest hand patterns, weighing 15 lb., were used on horseback, whilst heavier weapons of sixty odd pounds' weight were manipulated by foot soldiers and fired from trestles or tripods.[1]

The culverin may be seen in a variety of makes; some possess a touch-hole and flash-pan at the side, whilst the earlier kinds have no flash-pan at all. In some the barrel is circular, whilst in others it is hexagonal or octagonal. Of course, specimens are only to be found in museums, and are seldom obtainable for private collections.

Early in the sixteenth century the culverin gave place to the serpentin, which, in turn, was slightly

[1] See article on "Firearms" in *Chambers's Encyclopædia.*

modified and became the famous match-lock. To fire the culverin, the attendant had to stand with a lighted match over the touch-hole, but in the serpentin the igniter was gripped by a lever which descended into the flash-pan. The match-lock had the flash-pan covered by a lid, which gave a certain amount of protection to the sparking action in wet or windy weather.

The next innovation was the wheel-lock, a weapon which possessed a metal disc provided with a serrated edge. By winding up the disc and using the trigger to release it, it was possible to make the serrated wheel fly round at a considerable rate. As the rough teeth revolved, they scraped against a piece of flint and so produced sparks, which flew into the flash-pan and caused ignition of the powder charge. The system was certainly an ingenious one, but the cost of making these elaborate pieces of mechanism militated against the general use of the wheel-lock for army purposes.

After the wheel-lock came the flint-lock. This style of arm possessed a hammer which was provided with a "flint-cock." When released, the flint and the steel came into violent contact, and produced sparks which flew into the touch-powder.

The flint-lock was commonly used in the Netherlands, and was brought to England by William of Orange, remaining in use until 1840.[1] Specimens are obtainable for private collections, but early patterns are of some rarity and fairly expensive.

[1] See article on "Firearms" in *Chambers's Encyclopædia*.

The later history of the hand firearm used in the Army is interesting. "In 1635 a patent was taken out for making rifles in England. In the first half of the next century Benjamin Robins, a gunsmith, who died in 1751, made an alteration in the centre of gravity in the rifle by placing it nearer the forepart, and he also made the bullets oval instead of round. He discovered the true theory of the rifle: 'That the spinning of a rifle ball, like the rotation of an arrow, kept the axis of either in the same direction throughout their flight, and, to a great extent, prevented the irregularities caused by the inequalities in the substance of the bullet when driven from a shot-gun or musket.' But strangely enough Robins, though by far the ablest writer on projectiles of his own and many succeeding generations, exercised but a slight influence on his contemporaries. The Government of his day was not moved by his representations, or convinced by his theory. The Ministers of that day were slow in adopting improvements, a common failing of Ministers as a body, and riflemen were unknown among English troops until the necessity for them was made evident in the American War. The rifle was necessary to the existence of the backwoodsmen. Practice made them excellent shots, and when the Colonial irregulars were able to obtain suitable cover, regular troops could not stand before them. After a time foreign aid was resorted to. Hessian, Hanoverian, and Danish riflemen were engaged to serve against the revolted colonists; and it was not until upwards of ten years after the independence of America was

recognized that the first English rifle regiment was formed."[1]

During the first half of the nineteenth century all infantry regiments, with the exception of the Rifle Corps, were served with smooth-bored muskets, but after 1851 the Minié rifle was universally used. This weapon showed a distinct advance, but it had one serious drawback—it was heavy, as many of the men who fought in the Crimea learned by bitter experience. In 1853 the long Enfield rifle, a much lighter implement, was given to our soldiers. This was followed in 1860 by the short pattern Enfield; in 1864 by the Snider; in 1871 by the Martini-Henri; in 1886 by the Enfield-Martini; in 1887 by the Lee-Metford, Mark I, and the Mark II in 1898; whilst to-day the Service pattern is the Lee-Enfield, Mark III.

Swords are interesting weapons from the collector's point of view. As the antique specimens were stoutly made, of material that did not easily perish, it is quite possible to buy them, two or three hundred years old, at no very great cost.

It is not an easy matter to detect the date of a sword, but the armed figures on old prints, drawings, coins, etc., often hint at the period of construction. The Bayeux tapestry, for instance, enables us to see that the Norman pattern was of simple design, being straight, rather short, tapering and double-edged, whilst the handle was merely a grip with but little protection. This shape of sword, it may be said, was used for some three or four hundred years, and even

[1] W. G. Clifford, "Peeps at the British Army," p. 68.

1. Sword of time of Norman Conquest.
2. Sword of Fifteenth Century.
3. Court Sword of Eighteenth Century.
4. Basket of Cavalry Sword, Nineteenth Century.
5. Cutlas Sabre, Fifteenth Century.
6. Glaive.
7. Bill.
8. Halberd.
9. Pole Axe-head.
10. Head of Two-handed Sword.

in 1400 the majority of the specimens were much the same. It is true that by this time the quillons were becoming curved towards the blade, probably so that a slash would be arrested before it reached the knuckle of the soldier who received the blow. Of the sword of this period Ashdown writes: "The sword was attached to the belt at the uppermost part of the scabbard, and hung perpendicularly at the left side. It generally had a wheel pommel and a swelling grip, with quillons either straight or drooping slightly towards the blade. The latter was about an inch and a half broad at the hilt, thirty inches in length, and tapered to the point, while the section was either of a flattened or a lozenge shape. It was double-edged, and had a grip of varying dimensions, ranging from four inches in length to an extent which, in some examples, almost suggests a two-handed weapon, or the hand-and-a-half or bastard sword of a later period. The pommel, grip, and scabbard were at times elaborately enriched with a profusion of ornament. A new weapon was introduced at this period, the misericorde or dagger of mercy, used for dispatching a fallen foe whose wounds were beyond all surgical aid. It was a straight dagger, with no guard as a rule, and having both the hilt and scabbard curiously ornamented; the blade had but one edge, the section being triangular."[1]

As armour became more developed so changes appeared in the sword. The implement of medium weight was no longer serviceable against well-tempered metal suits; accordingly, the sword became

[1] "Arms and Armour," p. 181.

AN OLD SWORD WITH STRAIGHT CROSS-GUARDS.

AN ITALIAN DAGGER HAVING A REPLICA OF THE FAMOUS COLUMN OF ST. MARK FOR GRIP.

heavy and ponderous, so that it might smash where it would not be able to cut. So heavy were specimens made that they needed two hands to wield them, and as this prevented a shield being supported, the quillons were so shaped as to give extra protection. This was the origin of the basket hilts of present patterns.

Some swords are worthy of note on account of their shape and age, but others claim attention by reason of their historical associations. In the Royal United Service Museum there are many that are worth seeing from the latter point of view. One in particular may be mentioned. The exhibit bears the following inscription: "Sword of Admiral Villeneuve, Commander-in-Chief of the combined fleets of France and Spain, surrendered to Lord Collingwood at the battle off Cape Trafalgar, October 21, 1805. It was offered to Captain Atcherley, of the Marines. Atcherley refused to accept it, and took Villeneuve in his boat that he might surrender to Captain Pellew. Admiral Villeneuve, having been taken prisoner, was sent to England, where he was detained until May 3, 1806."

Beyond firearms and swords the collector may find many treasures among such weapons as daggers, bayonets, lances, battle-axes, pikes, spears, boomerangs, assegais, and native clubs. It should always be remembered, however, that the weapons used by British forces, past and present, are of more interest and value than those coming from savage races.

# VII

# EARLY BRITISH WAR MEDALS

# CHAPTER VII

## EARLY BRITISH WAR MEDALS

How to arrange a collection of medals—Factors which influence the value of a medal—The earliest medals—The first English medal—The first English military medal—The Forlorn Hope medal—The Dunbar medal—The Culloden medal—Medals granted by the Honourable East India Company—The Pope's medal, 1793—The Emperor Francis II of Germany's medal, 1794—The Seringapatam medal—The Egyptian medal, 1801—The Rodriguez medal—The Nepaul medal—The Maida medal—The Peninsular officers' medal

THE dignity which enshrines a collection of war medals is something greater and fuller than that which can be ascribed to almost any other branch of curio collecting. Coins, china, furniture, and prints are all fascinating in their way, but none seem to have the same depth of interest as is possessed by the average collection of war medals. To handle one of these tokens of strife and bloodshed is to call up feelings of reverence and honour for the man who spent his energies so freely in earning it, and it is probably on account of this extrinsic quality that war medals are so highly prized among connoisseurs.

With many forms of collecting, the different specimens that are available are so numerous as to be

overwhelming, but this drawback cannot act as a deterrent to the would-be medal collector. British medals have been fashioned with a sparing hand, and their number is more or less limited. Many of them, it is true, are extremely costly, whilst a select few are quite prohibitive in price—a matter which, perhaps, adds to the zest of collecting.

The best method of storing these treasures is to follow the plan adopted by coin-collectors, and to range them on trays in the shallow drawers of coin-cabinets. Where the pieces are few in number, it is a good plan to mount them on a board covered with black velvet, and to frame them just as one does a picture. To have no particular method of keeping them, to leave them lying loose in drawers, or to place them as casual ornaments in curio or china cabinets is decidedly wrong, for a few scratches, a fall, or a little rough handling will often reduce considerably the value of a specimen.

For the benefit of the uninitiated, it may be well to mention that not only does the value of a medal depend upon its state of preservation—that is to say, whether it is in mint condition, slightly rubbed, much worn, scratched, battered, re-engraved, etc.—but also upon the number of clasps that go with it. It must not be thought that collectors tolerate the indiscriminate adding of clasps to claspless medals. A medal that was awarded with, say, one additional honour cannot be turned into a three-clasp decoration by purchasing two clasps from a dealer and placing them upon the slide ribbon. The medal in question, if it be less than a hundred years old, has

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ROYALIST BADGE WORN BY THE PARTISANS OF CHARLES I.

the name of the original possessor engraved upon the flange, and by turning to the Medal Rolls the number of clasps issued with the particular decoration can be found. Another factor which affects the value of a medal is the regiment to which it was issued. A medal given to a private in a crack regiment will possess a greater value than an identical medal awarded to a private in a less noted one. The rank of the recipient is also taken into account; this, however, is perhaps only natural.

Medals were known to the Ancients. The Greeks, for instance, have left behind them many interesting specimens which can still be seen in our public museums, but none of them were given as recompenses for military bravery. The ordinary soldier of these early days had no status, and therefore received no rewards, whilst the leaders were given crowns of laurel, bracelets, and neck chains of gold for the services they rendered.

It was Queen Elizabeth who first thought of giving medals to British fighting men, and it was the crews of the ships which sailed out to meet the Armada that received them.

The first medals to be given for military, as distinct from naval, honours were struck by Charles I. Probably the very earliest award made by this King was the medal presented to Sir Robert Welch, an officer in the Royalist Cavalry, whose bravery in recovering the standard from the Parliamentary forces at Edge Hill excited the admiration of every member in his party.

Charles gave orders for many other medals to be struck, but most of them were presented to officers holding high posts who had performed special services in times of peace as well as war. Many of these decorations were fashioned in single copies, and as practically none of them bore any inscriptions beyond the title and motto of the King, it is impossible to ascribe them to any definite act of military value. They were all oval in shape, whilst the designs showed considerable artistic merit.

All these medals were intended to be worn suspended around the neck, or fixed brooch-like in the hat. Usually, the ribbons which were worn with them could be selected by the possessor at will, no fixed pattern being officially decreed, as obtains in present times. As may be expected, specimens belonging to this early period are now extremely costly, but they are often obtainable at public sales. A fine collection of them may be inspected in the medal-room at the British Museum.

Charles I evidently had great faith in the value of decorations, for we find that towards the latter part of his reign he instituted a general medal, known popularly as the Forlorn Hope medal, which was to be awarded much on the lines which regulate the granting of the Victoria Cross to-day.

The warrant which announced these awards ran as follows:—

"CHARLES R. Trusty and well beloved, we greet you well, whereas we have received information that those soldiers which have been forward to serve us in the Forlorn-hope, are not looked upon according to

their merited valour and loyal service. We do, therefore, require, that from henceforward, the Commander-in-Chief both of Horse and Foot, which lead up the Forlorn-hope upon whom also we mean to bestow special tokens of our princely favour, do signify in writing the names of those soldiers whom they find most forward in serving us, their King and country, that care may be taken to reward their deservings and make them specially known to all our good subjects. For which end we have thought fit to require Sir William Parkhurst, Kt., and Thomas Bushell, Esq., Wardens of the Mint, to provide from time to time certain Badges of Silver, containing our Royal image, and that of our dearest son, Prince Charles, to be delivered to wear on the breast of every man who shall be certified under the hands of their Commander-in-Chief to have done us faithful service in the Forlorn-hope.

"And we do, therefore, most straightly command that no soldier at any time do sell, nor any of our subjects presume to buy, or wear, any of these said Badges, other than they to whom we shall give the same, and that under such pain and punishment as the Council of War shall think fit to inflict if any shall presume to offend against this our Royal command. And we further require the said Commanders and Wardens of our Mint to keep several registers of the names of those, and of their country, for whom they shall give their certificate. Given at our Court, at Oxford, the 18th day of May, 1643."

It is unfortunate that what records were presumably kept, under these orders, were destroyed by

a disastrous fire which took place at Oxford in 1644. Thus we neither know how many specimens of the Forlorn Hope medal were distributed, nor do we even know for certain the exact design it bore. A number of identical copies exist of a medallion bearing the profile of King Charles on the obverse, and that of Prince Charles on the reverse, and this is usually considered to be the award in question.

The Dunbar medal, the next to call for attention, is of special interest, as it was the first British award to be given to every member of the fighting forces, whether man or officer. This attractive decoration was struck in 1650 in two sizes, a small gold piece for officers and a large copper one for distribution among the ranks. Both bore the same design, namely, Cromwell's profile and the inscription "Word . at . Dunbar. The Lord of Hosts . Septem. Y . 3 . 1650 .," on the obverse, and a view, in exaggerated perspective, of Parliament in full assembly on the reverse.

A curious letter, referring to the design of this medal, and written by the Protector, is still extant. It explains that Cromwell while in Scotland received a visit from the artist chosen by Parliament to execute the design. The artist went to beg a few sittings of the great leader with a view to producing a faithful portrait-likeness. But Cromwell was extremely loath to allow his features to be displayed upon the medal, and advanced all manner of excuses, probably owing to feelings of over-sensitiveness. In the end he was prevailed upon, and the medal bore his profile as stated above. This incident is of special interest, as

historians have seldom, if ever, mentioned in discussing the character of this able soldier that one of his qualities was modesty.

After Dunbar came a lengthy period during which many medals were struck; they were all, however, of an individual character, being awarded to leaders for personal services.

Culloden, which was fought on April 16, 1746, was the next event to call for a special issue of medals. To commemorate the Young Pretender's rout, oval medals in gold and silver were struck. It is presumed that the gold pieces were awarded to leaders of the highest rank, whilst the silver ones went to those of lesser importance. It is certain, however, that no awards were made to the common soldiers.

The design was remarkably bold and imposing; the obverse bore a simple profile of the Duke of Cumberland with short curly hair and the word "Cumberland," whilst the reverse showed an unclothed full-length figure of Apollo, looking to the left. The inscription "Actum est ilicet perut" and, also in Latin, "Battle of Culloden, April 16th, 1746," appeared on the reverse.

This medal was one of the first to be issued with a definitely prescribed pattern for the ribbon. The warrant effecting its issue stated that "it was to be worn round the necks of officers by means of a crimson ribbon having a narrow green border." The medal is exceedingly rare, but of the few copies known to exist one, fortunately, may be seen among

the treasures of the British Museum, and another in the Royal United Service Museum.

The history of British and Indian medals is so interwoven that it is impossible to study the first without knowing something of the latter. It may even be claimed that much which affected the fashioning and awarding of late eighteenth-century decorations given by the authorities at Bombay has since been copied by our authorities at home. The most obvious point bearing on this contention deals with the shape of the medals. Before the Indian examples, all of which were circular, were struck, the British patterns invariably appeared oval in form, whilst most of the subsequent issues have been circular. Again, the allegorical designs of patriotic themes, which our most recent medals bear, had their early origin in the sepoy tableaux which decorated the reverse of the Indian medals. The reverse side of British medals before the Indian specimens were issued usually depicted the features of a royal personage, a coat of arms, or, perhaps, a sailing vessel. But the greatest influencing factor of the Indian medals was the method of granting them. Every soldier from the highest general down to the lowest fighter received an award. In England quite a different custom prevailed. With the single exception of the Dunbar medal, no English soldier was ever awarded a royal medal until Waterloo, unless his conduct had been unusually brave and he had merited some special recognition. The controversy which raged round Wellington's campaigns as to

THE CRIMEAN MEDAL.

whether the ordinary men as a class should or should not receive decorations was finally settled by remembering the sepoys of India. If it were good for these soldiers to receive them, then our British fighting men must have them as well. Such was the popular opinion which prevailed.

The pioneer medal from India is usually spoken of as the 1778 decoration awarded for services at Poona, but, as no specimens are known to exist, there is reasonable doubt as to whether the decoration was ever struck. The records, however, state plainly that the Bombay Council decided to give medals to all the officers among the grenadier-sepoys who went with Colonel Egerton to quell a native rising in Poona.

In 1780, a campaign in Deccan took place against Tippoo Sahib and his father. A medal was afterwards minted by the Honourable East India Company and presented to all officers and men forming the Bengal Army. There were gold and silver specimens, vast numbers of both being struck. The obverse showed Britannia, leaning forward, offering a wreath to a fort flying a British flag. The reverse bore a Persian inscription.

A second encounter with Tippoo Sahib, known as the Mysore Campaign, took place in 1791–2. The medals which were subsequently struck for the officers and men who served under Colonel Cockerell were made in gold and silver and were intended to be worn around the neck, suspended by a yellow silk cord. The obverse depicted a sepoy grasping a half-unfurled British flag, trampling at the same

time on the enemy's colours; the reverse bore the inscription, "For Services in Mysore, A.D. 1791–1792."

If medals were ever dearly won, those of the Mysore Campaign seem to have been, for many stories have been told of the great daring shown by Cockerell's men. Thomas Carter in his work on "War Medals" writes as follows: "One of the most dashing exploits in the War of Mysore was the capture of Bangalore, the second city in the dominions of Tippoo. It was enclosed by a high wall and a deep ditch, and the gate was covered by a close thicket of Indian thorns. The attack was made without any examination of the ground, and the troops in advancing and endeavouring to force an entrance were exposed to a destructive fire of musketry. Colonel Moorhouse, one of the best officers in the service, fell mortally wounded. At length, Lieutenant Ayre, a man of diminutive stature, succeeded in forcing his way through the shattered gate; which gallant action being observed by General Meadows, he shouted to the stormer, 'Well done! Now, whiskers, try, if you can, to follow and support the little gentleman.' This animated appeal succeeded: the troops rushed through the gate into the town and drove out the enemy at the point of the bayonet."

It is now necessary to speak of two medals of a slightly different nature to any of the foregoing. In mentioning the first, we must recall the work undertaken by the 12th Lancers in 1793, when one section of the regiment went to Corsica and, landing, cap-

tured the Bastia, whilst another section went forward to the Italian coast and entered the harbour of Civitavecchia. For the protection thus afforded him, Pope Pius VI gave a dozen of the officers gold medals suitably inscribed. These decorations, it must be added, were not officially recognized in England, and the recipients received no permission to wear them when in uniform.

In the year 1794, another case of British soldiers receiving a foreign decoration occurred. In this instance, Emperor Francis II of Germany was the donor of a gold medal and a chain pendant to each of eight officers of the 15th Light Dragoons. The Emperor had fallen into a precarious position at Villiers-en-Crouché, a small settlement near Cambray, and, had it not been for the heroic and persistent efforts of the English, he would certainly have been captured by the French, who were massed in great numbers. The awards were made as a thank-offering for his lucky escape.

Unlike the Pope's decorations, those of Francis II were recognized by the English Army authorities, and the recipients were allowed to wear them when parading in full dress. The following letter may be quoted in reference to the matter[1]:—

"To Lord Dorchester, Colonel of the 15th Dragoons.

*May* 1, 1798.

My Lord,—The Emperor of Germany having been pleased to present each of the officers of the

[1] D. H. Irwin, "War Medals," p. 17.

15th Regiment, under your Lordship's command, who distinguished themselves in so gallant a manner by their spirited attack upon the enemy, with a very inferior force, on the 24th April, 1794, near Cambray, a gold medal has been struck by his Imperial Majesty's orders, on the occasion, as a particular mark of the sense he entertained of the signal service thereby rendered to the Allied Army. I have therefore the honour, by order of his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief to signify to your Lordship his Majesty's pleasure that the above-mentioned officers shall be permitted to wear the said medals constantly with their uniforms, as an honorary badge of their bravery in the field of action, and an inducement to all others to imitate, on every favourable occasion, their glorious example.

I have, etc.,

WM. FAWCETT, *Adjutant-General.*"

From this time until the Peninsular campaign almost all the medals which we have to record—many of them of a highly interesting nature—were awarded to native troops by the Honourable East India Company.

The first, dated 1807, reminds us of the gradual expansion of the British Empire. It was struck to commemorate the capture of Ceylon from the Dutch, 1795-6. The medal was made in gold and silver Calcutta and was given, probably exclusively, to the Bengal Native Artillery—one of those sections of the native Indian Army of which the East India Company was justly proud. The medal was un-

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THE GENERAL SERVICE MEDAL,
1793–1814.

THE AFGHAN MEDAL.

SOUTH AFRICAN MEDAL, 1877–9.

usually plain, there being no pictorial design, but merely the inscription, "For Service at the Island of Ceylon, A.D. 1795–6," on the obverse, and a Persian inscription on the reverse. It may be said that questions were asked by those in authority as to how so severe a pattern came to be chosen, and the reply was given that as no exceptional feats occurred during the campaign, a simple design was deemed most suitable. The reason seems unconvincing.

The siege and capture of Seringapatam, which culminated in the death of that arch-enemy, Tippoo Sahib, was the occasion for issuing a Madras medal, according to a general order dated July 18, 1808. Gold pieces were given to senior officers, silver gilt pieces to field officers, silver pieces to junior officers, bronze pieces to the rank and file of the British force, and tin pieces to sepoys. The design was attractive: on the obverse appeared a landscape view of our gallant men storming Seringapatam, whilst a lion overwhelming a tiger filled the reverse. The medal was not made in Calcutta, as was usually the case with the Indian decorations, but at Birmingham.

Collectors have often been at a loss to know how the Indian awards were intended to be worn. In reference to the Seringapatam distinction, Mayo, in "Medals and Decorations of the British Army and Navy," says: "There is no doubt that they were issued unmounted, and as no directions had been given by the authorities the details as to ribbon and mountings devolved on the recipients, who exercised their own discretion and taste. It is, however, prob-

able that the European officers wore them as the gold medals for the Peninsular and other campaigns were worn—i.e. round the neck, or at the button-hole, according to rank. Some added a clasp bearing the word Seringapatam.

"Three patterns of ribbon, at least, appear to have been used, viz. red with blue borders, yellow watered, and plain red. That the first was used under some sort of authority is gathered from a discussion which took place between the Madras Government and the Commander-in-Chief in 1831, on the occasion of the distribution of the medals awarded to the native troops in the first Burmese war. The Commander-in-Chief had proposed that a piece of red ribbon with blue borders should be issued with each medal. The Government assented to the issue of the ribbon but objected to the pattern on the ground of its resemblance to the Waterloo ribbon. To this the Commander-in-Chief replied that the ribbon he had proposed was common to all medals granted by His Majesty in modern times, and was considered to be the medal ribbon of England. He added: 'The medals of Seringapatam and Java are both suspended from it, and both are so worn with the sanction of His Majesty.' This is authoritative evidence of the medal being worn with the only military ribbon then in use.

"Lord Harris, who commanded at Seringapatam, wore his medal, gold, suspended round his neck by the red, blue-bordered ribbon, as the gold medal was worn by general officers. A bust of his lordship was exhibited at the Royal Military Exhibition, at Chelsea

in 1890. This showed the medal worn round the neck, with a clasp inscribed 'Seringapatam.'"

A second Seringapatam medal, almost similar in design to the first, was struck in 1808 and presented to British as well as native troops by order of the East India Company. This decoration was made at Calcutta.

The next medal takes us to Egypt and recalls to mind a number of desperate encounters between the English and French. In the year 1800 an army of 15,000 British soldiers, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, had been assembled in the peninsula. The French were already massed there in great numbers, being more than double our strength. On March 21, 1801, a bloody contest took place at Alexandria, and Abercrombie fell mortally wounded. Reinforcements were necessary, and these were supplied by the East India Company, which dispatched an expeditionary force of native troops with commendable promptitude. On returning to India in 1803, the Government of Bombay promised the men a campaign medal—that is to say, a medal would be granted to each individual who set out to fight for the British cause. Nine years elapsed before the medal was struck, but it is gratifying to know that specimens were given to the descendants of all soldiers whose demise had taken place in the meantime. Sixteen gold and 2,199 silver copies were struck at a cost of R. 5519.8.

The obverse of this award showed a sepoy holding a Union Jack, whilst in the background the tents of the Indian camp were revealed. A

Persian inscription filled the exergue (i.e. the section of the circular face of the medal cut off from the rest by a straight line). The reverse revealed a wooden British ship nearing the coast, presumably of Egypt. The date, MDCCCI, was added.

The Turkish Sultan, also, gave a medal to the British soldiers who took part in this campaign. It is usually spoken of as "The Order of the Crescent."

These early years of the nineteenth century brought the English into many unfortunate conflicts with our present allies, the French. No sooner was strife at an end in Egypt than we once more met our gallant rivals, this time in the Islands of Rodrigues, Bourbon, and Mauritius. It was in the years 1809–10, under the command of General J. Abercromby, who led the 6th and 24th Madras Infantry, also the 4th Bombay Infantry, and Vice-Admiral Bertie, who brought a squadron of ships, that a strong force met and defeated the French. The medal which was afterwards awarded to all natives who took part in the engagement was inscribed, "This medal was conferred in commemoration of the bravery and fidelity exhibited by the Sepoys of the English Company in the capture of the Islands of Rodrigues, Bourbon, and Mauritius in the year of Hegira, 1226." The date as reckoned by the English calendar was also given. The obverse revealed a sepoy standing with our national flag in one hand and a rifle in the other. A cannon was shown just behind him, whilst the background depicted an expanse of sea. Gold and silver pieces were struck by the Calcutta Mint.

The following Order in Council of the year 1811 is of interest :—

"On the occasion of the approaching return from the late French islands of the volunteers from Bengal, Fort St. George, and Bombay, to the Presidencies to which they respectively belong, His Excellency the Vice-President in Council considers it to be no less an act of justice than of indispensable duty to record the high sense he entertains of the services performed by the native soldiery, who were employed in concert with His Majesty's troops in the reduction of the Islands of Rodriguez, Bourbon, and Mauritius. He is pleased to signify his approbation of the distinguished merits of the volunteers by conferring honorary medals on all the native commissioned and non-commissioned officers, troopers, sepoys, gaulundauze, and gun lascars employed on that service."

Closely following on the declaration of peace in the three above-mentioned islands of the Indian Ocean came trouble with the Dutch in Java. As was usual, a joint army of home and native troops was dispatched to the scene of conflict. A victory was gained in 1811, and on February 11, 1812, seven thousand medals were struck by the East India Company at Calcutta, for distribution among the Indian troops. The British regiments, the 14th, 59th, 69th, 78th, and 89th Foot, took part in the expedition but, following the usual custom, received no awards. The particulars of this Indian medal were as follows: Obverse —sepoys storming Fort Cornelis, upon which was prominently displayed a flagstaff bearing a British

flag above, presumably, a Dutch flag with the word CORNELIS printed above the scene. Reverse—a Persian inscription and August MDCCCX . Java Conquered . XXVI.

The Nepaul medal was the next to be struck by the Honourable East India Company. It bears the date of 1816. In granting this award, a departure was made from the usual custom of giving a decoration to every soldier, or his heirs, who actually set out from home with an expeditionary force. In this case, the medal was granted, first, to officers who reached the fighting area and, second, to the men who conducted themselves with conspicuous bravery. Mayo says that the feeling was probably gaining ground that too many medals were being struck and their value was becoming lessened in consequence. This he suggests was the reason for restricting the number on this occasion.

The obverse of the Nepaul medal showed a stirring picture of hills, strongly fortified, with cannon in the foreground and an array of bayonets just coming into view. The reverse consisted of a Persian inscription.

After Nepaul, a long period followed during which no campaign medals were awarded to Indian troops. Certain individual awards were made to officers, but as in each case less than twenty pieces were struck, we consider it unnecessary to record them in detail.

At this point we must retrace our steps to the year 1806 and speak of the Battle of Maida, which may be described as an outlying encounter in the

Napoleonic campaigns. To celebrate Sir John Stuart's victory over the forces led by General Regnier, a medal was struck and presented to thirteen of the highest officers. The award in itself was unimportant, but as it was practically the first royal medal to be given to British soldiers since the time of Culloden, it must be looked upon as an epoch-making decoration. We must admit that Nelson's men at Trafalgar had received awards, and certain regiments which took part in various Napoleonic wars were provided with coveted distinctions, but in every case they were planned and paid for by private individuals and so cannot rank in any way as royal medals. It is perhaps interesting to record, in parenthesis, that the Trafalgar medals were given to the recipients by an engineer of Birmingham named Matthew Boulton.

The last award to be described in this chapter is the Peninsular medal. Two sizes, both in gold, were struck and presented to officers. No men received them. The designs of both were: Obverse —Britannia, seated on a globe, holding out a palm; a couchant lion beside her. Reverse—a laurel wreath framing the name of one of the following battles: Roleia, Vimeira, Sahagun, Benevente, Corunna, Martinique, Talavera, Guadaloupe, Busaco, Barrosa, Fuentes d'Onoro, Albuera, Java, Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, Salamanca, Fort Detroit, Vittoria, Pyrenees, St. Sebastian Chateauguay, Nivelle, Nive, Orthes, and Toulouse. The name and rank of the recipient was engraved upon the edge.

The larger medal was awarded to general officers

and was provided with an attachment for wearing around the neck, a crimson ribbon with blue edging being specified. The smaller medal was given to junior officers who took command in cases where their superior-commanders had been disabled. This award was provided with a buckle and ribbon as above and was intended for wear upon the breast.

Both the large and small medals were conferred for service in one engagement. For a second or third engagement bars were provided. These, it may be added, in parenthesis, were the first bars given to British soldiers.

When an officer received distinctions in more than three engagements he was awarded the Peninsular Cross instead of the foregoing circular medals. This distinction was struck in gold and had much the same shape and design as was afterwards selected for the Victoria Cross. The lion on the former, however, faces to the right, whilst on the latter it looks to the left.

In this chapter we have traced the history of British medals from their inception in the reign of Elizabeth down to the stormy times of the Duke of Wellington. The period was marked by the paucity of awards made to British troops. Popular opinion, however, was gradually forcing its influence during the latter years of the period upon the authorities who withheld them, and the following chapter shows how agitations coming from non-military quarters caused a complete change of policy in the granting of these coveted distinctions.

THE INDIAN MUTINY MEDAL.

VIII

# MILITARY MEDALS STRUCK BY THE MINT

## CHAPTER VIII

### MILITARY MEDALS STRUCK BY THE MINT

Campaign medals considered—Waterloo—Burmah—China—Cabul—Jellalabad—Scinde—Meeanee—Sobraon—The men's Peninsular medal—Punjab—Indian General Service medals—South Africa, 1850–3; also 1877–9—Baltic—Crimea—Indian Mutiny—Abyssinia—New Zealand—Later awards

IN these days when the deeds of brave men, whether they be of high or low rank, are acclaimed with equal praise, it is extremely difficult to understand the feelings which actuated the authorities a hundred or more years ago when awarding military medals. Parliament, though it was supposed to represent the masses, decided time after time in these early years of the nineteenth century that decorations were only meant for soldiers of rank and that the common men had neither claim nor title to them. The usual plea was that the ordinary soldier had been paid for his services, and there the nation's obligation to him was at an end. Somehow or other, the authorities seem to have shut their eyes to the fact that the same argument could be applied with equal force to the commanders of the Army. It is somewhat lamentable to note that even so grand a soldier as the Duke of Wellington argued in favour of

withholding rewards from the rank and file, and his opinion, we may be sure, had great influence in certain high quarters.

But in spite of the decided opinions held by those in authority, there was a strong party of agitators who opposed these narrow views. To them must be accredited much, for in face of every conceivable obstacle they left no stone unturned until the coveted awards were shared by men as well as commanders. In the early days which followed Waterloo this little band displayed particular activity. "Are our ordinary soldiers, fresh home from the Belgian battlefields, to go unrewarded as the Peninsular heroes have done?" was their constant cry. The people took up the matter, and only when absolutely forced to did Parliament agree to strike a medal for all ranks of the victorious army. The official decree ran as follows :—

"The Prince Regent has been graciously pleased in the name and on behalf of His Majesty to command that in commemoration of the brilliant and decisive victory of Waterloo, a medal shall be conferred upon every officer, non-commissioned officer, and soldier present upon that memorable occasion.

By command of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

FREDERICK, *Commander-in-Chief.*"

Undoubtedly the innovation of rewarding the rank and file as well as the officers created much

satisfaction. The people openly displayed their approval, the soldiers were pleased beyond measure, and the Press spoke of the change as a step in the right direction ; such, at any rate, is the impression one gathers from reading articles bearing on the matter in contemporary numbers of the *Quarterly Review.*

The Waterloo medal bore on the obverse a profile of George and the inscription "George P. Regent." On the reverse was a winged figure of Victory seated upon a rectangular scroll bearing the word "Waterloo," and the date "June 18, 1815." The reverse design was obviously copied from a coin of Elias which is exhibited in the British Museum. The ribbon was of red silk flanked with blue edges. This material was passed through a circular ring and not through a horizontal slot, as is customary to-day.

The award was received by all grades of men who were present at the Battle of Ligny, June 16th; Quatre Bras, June 17th; Waterloo, June 18th; as well as by certain forces which were posted in the rear of the battlefield on June 18th. Certain German troops were also decorated with this award.

The collector will often come across specimens of this medal, which are provided with slots instead of rings for holding the ribbon in position. Many of the original recipients preferred this latter method of attachment and made the alteration themselves. Such specimens, therefore, are not in strict accordance with the official pattern and are in consequence of less value than the unaltered kind.

Some ten years elapsed before the next medal, styled the First Burmah Medal, 1824–6, was struck. This being an Indian award, no royal features were portrayed. On the obverse was a palm-tree and an army storming an Eastern city, probably Rangoon; there was also a Persian inscription in the exergue. On the reverse, a lion was encountering a white elephant, and a British flag waved prominently in the background. The decoration was struck in gold for officers, and silver for men of other standing. For the first time with Indian medals, a definite ribbon, red and blue, was prescribed.

The earliest award to bear the head of Queen Victoria was the China medal of 1842. The features portrayed on this specimen were similar to those shown on a medallion executed by William Wyon in 1837, and struck to commemorate Victoria's first visit to the City of London as queen. Her Majesty evinced a great liking for this rendering of her features, and consequently it was used for the coinage, the postage stamps, and, lastly, the medals. The reverse side revealed a group of arms of various kinds. The ribbon was red, edged with yellow. It was given both to soldiers and sailors.

This award may be confused with a later China medal of the same design. The earlier pattern, however, bears the year 1842 under the word China in the exergue, whilst the 1857–60 pattern has no date at all. Also, no bars were furnished with the earlier specimen, but as many as six may be found on the latter.

Writing of the thrilling incidents which crowded the first campaign, Carter describes one of them in the following words: "The west gate had been blown in by Captain Pears, the commanding engineer. A body of Tartars, having been driven into one division of the western outwork, refused to surrender, when most of them were either shot or destroyed in the burning houses, several of which had been set on fire by the enemy or by the British guns. Major-General Bartley subsequently proceeded with a body of troops consisting of the 18th and part of the 49th Regiment, when a hot engagement ensued with about one thousand Tartars, who, under cover of some enclosures, opened a destructive fire on the soldiers as they were filing round the walls. The leading division of the 49th dashed down the ramparts, while the 18th pushed on. As a result, the enemy was soon dispersed, although some fought with great desperation.

"From the sun becoming so overpowering it was found impossible to move with men already fatigued by their exertions, many of whom died from the intense heat. The troops, therefore, remained in occupation of the gates until six o'clock, when several parties were pushed into the Tartar city and to the public offices. On passing through the city and suburbs, the painful spectacle presented itself of hundreds of the dead bodies of men, women, and children lying in the houses, numerous families having destroyed themselves sooner than outlive the disgrace of their city being captured by foreigners."

The second Chinese war resulted from a cumula-

tion of depredatory movements on the part of the natives, but the capture of the *Arrow*, a vessel flying the British flag, was directly responsible for the declaration of hostilities.

The next medal struck at the Mint was awarded to the soldiers who took arms in 1842, in Cabul. The obverse bore the Wyon head of Victoria, whilst the reverse was issued in four patterns as follows:—

1. A wreath encircling the inscription "Candahar, 1842."

2. A wreath encircling the word "Ghuznee," and another encircling the word "Cabul."

3. A wreath encircling the inscription "Candahar, Ghuznee, Cabul, 1842."

4. A wreath encircling the inscription "Cabul, 1842."

The ribbon attached to all the varieties was of the rainbow pattern which has since become familiar on Indian medals.

A native medal was also struck at the Mint for distribution among the Indian troops. Instead of Victoria's bust a trophy of arms surmounting the inscription "Invicta, MDCCCXLII," filled the obverse side.

After Cabul came the Jellalabad rising. To celebrate the victories of this campaign, a medal was struck at Calcutta and distributed to all soldiers who took part in the various actions. The design was considered unsatisfactory; the obverse bore a simple mural crown, the upper edge of which resembled the embattled coping of a castle, whilst the reverse showed the date "VII April 1842," in bold but plain lettering.

In consequence of the dissatisfaction which the medal caused, another was struck by the Mint in London and sent out to the troops in 1845. An order was issued at the same time stating that all recipients of the Calcutta award could have their decoration changed for the London award on making formal application. Curiously enough, the soldiers who had grumbled at the pattern of the earlier medal showed little desire to become recipients of the newer piece, and in only a few cases was the exchange made. The London striking is consequently somewhat rare.

The Mint medal bore the Wyon head of Victoria surrounded with the words "Victoria Vindex," whilst the rear showed a graceful figure of Victory, with wings, holding a flag and a laurel wreath. The words "Jellalabad, VII April MDCCCXLII" encircled the figure. The rainbow ribbon of India suspended the medal.

The early forties were troublous times in India. Hardly twelve months after Jellalabad had been fought and won, a medal was earned by our brave troops in the province of Scinde. Referring to this campaign, Mayo quotes the following interesting letter:—

"COLONIAL OFFICE,
DOWNING STREET.
*18th July*, 1843.

MY LORD,

I have the honour to acquaint your Lordships, that the Queen, being desirous of commemorating the signal success obtained by the Force under the command of Major-General Sir

Charles Napier, in Scinde, has been graciously pleased to command that a Medal, to resemble as nearly as possible that proposed for the Troops employed in Afghanistan, should be conferred upon the Officers, Non-commissioned officers, and Soldiers in Her Majesty's Service, who were engaged in the Battles of Meeanee and Hyderabad.

Without anticipating the course which the Court of Directors of the East India Co. may propose to take for commemorating the success of the Company's Troops in Scinde, I think it nevertheless right to add that Her Majesty would readily permit the Officers, Non-commissioned officers, and Soldiers of the Company's Army to whom the Court of Directors might think proper to grant Medals in commemoration of the Battles of Meeanee and Hyderabad to wear such Medals in all parts of Her Majesty's Dominions.

I have etc.,

STANLEY,

*The Presidency of the Indian Board.*"

The Mint medal issued in March 1846 bore the Wyon head of Victoria, with the words "Victoria Regina" on the obverse, but of the reverse there were three patterns. The first showed a laurel wreath and crown encircling the word "Meeanee"; the second had the word "Hyderabad" substituted; whilst the third gave both battles, namely "Meeanee and Hyderabad." The rainbow ribbon was again employed.

Before turning to the next medal, it is pleasant

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THE CHINA MEDAL, 1842–60.

THE EGYPTIAN MEDAL, 1882–9.

to recall the Duke of Wellington's brief eulogy of Sir Charles Napier's campaign, which he addressed to the House of Lords.

"Sir Charles Napier moved his troops through the desert against hostile forces, he transported his guns under circumstances of extreme difficulty and in a most extraordinary manner, and he cut off a retreat of the enemy which rendered it impossible for them ever to regain their positions." Meeanee was fought on February 17th, and Hyderabad on March 24, 1843.

Two years after Scinde, the Sutlej Campaign was waged between British troops and Sikhs. The Mint medal struck to commemorate our victories was the second award to carry clasps or bars—the officers' Peninsular medal being the first. The obverse again showed Wyon's head of Victoria: the reverse displayed a stirring picture of Victory holding out a wreath, with a stack of arms at her feet. The words "Army of the Sutlej" encircled the allegory. Of the exergue on the reverse, there were four different types: the first read "Moodkee, 1845"; the second, "Ferozeshuhur, 1845"; the third, "Aliwal, 1846"; and the fourth, "Sobraon, 1846."

The General Order which regulated the granting of this decoration stated that soldiers who took part in more than one engagement were to receive the medal engraved with the name of their earliest encounter, whilst bars were to be added for subsequent victories. From this it is clear that the Sobraon medal cannot be found with any bars. Bars, the decree stated, were to be worn in the

following order, counting upwards from the medal: Ferozeshuhur, Aliwal, and Sobraon. Naturally, no bars for Moodkee were issued.

Curious as it may seem, the next decoration to be struck by the Mint was the rankers' Peninsular medal. It will be remembered that on the conclusion of Wellington's campaign in Spain two gold pieces were issued for officers, but that no awards were presented to the ordinary soldiers. This arrangement pleased neither the men nor the officers, who knew how much the country was indebted to the rank and file. As a consequence, the question of the men's medal was constantly discussed in Parliament. In 1844, the matter was thoroughly debated upon in the Lower House, but the opposers urged with a certain amount of success that Wellington had decided years ago that no award should be granted. Sir Charles Napier's answer to this lame argument was to the point. "It is never too late to do a good thing," he retorted amidst the applause of his followers. Two years later, in 1846, the matter was again before the House, and, probably because Queen Victoria was somewhat partial to the granting of distinctions when merited, a favourable decision was arrived at. The men were to have the medal so long withheld from them, as the following General Order of June 1, 1847, explains:—

"Her Majesty having been graciously pleased to command that a medal should be struck to record the services of her fleets and armies during the wars commencing 1793, and ending in 1814, and that one should be conferred upon every officer, non-com-

missioned officer and soldier of the army who was in any battle or siege, to commemorate which medals have been struck by command of Her Majesty's Royal predecessors and have been distributed to the general or superior officers of the general armies and corps of troops engaged, in conformity with the regulations of the army at that time in force. . . ."

The Order was somewhat lengthy and involved, but its chief clauses were: (*a*) men should receive medals and clasps for all engagements figuring on the superior officers' medals and clasps of 1808–9, and (*b*) relatives of men since deceased could claim the award on production of sufficient title.

The medals were issued to 19,000 claimants in 1848. In 1850, the Duke of Richmond suggested that the troops in Egypt, who had fought with great bravery, should also receive the distinction, and the Queen graciously consented to recognize their services. In this case, however, the relatives of dead soldiers could not claim the award.

There is much about the rankers' Peninsular medal which is unsatisfactory. In the first place, the reverse bears the figure of Victoria crowning the Duke of Wellington. As he took no part in many of the contributory campaigns, and as his veto so long delayed the granting of the decoration, some other design would have been more appropriate. Again, the date placed in the exergue, 1793–1814, is much too vague. And lastly, the head of Victoria on the obverse has often caused confusion, as she did not ascend the throne until some three years after the campaign had come to a welcome close.

The Punjab award, 1848–9, is probably one of the most artistic pieces of work emanating from the London Mint. On the obverse was the familiar Wyon head of Victoria, surrounded by the words "Victoria Regina," whilst on the reverse was a stirring tableau representing Sikhs presenting their arms to Major-General Sir Walter Raleigh Gilbert at Rawul Pindee. The ribbon was blue, striped with two narrow lines of yellow. There were three clasps: Chilianwala, Mooltan, and Goojerat.

The most desperate encounter in this campaign was the Battle of Chilianwala, during which the brigade under Brigadier Pennycuick and Lieutenant-Colonel Brookes was led to make a disastrous charge owing to a misunderstanding. The 24th Regiment suffered terribly, and their medals are now extremely valuable in consequence.

In 1851, Queen Victoria, in furtherance of her policy of rewarding unrecognized actions of the past, decided to issue an Indian General Service medal to cover the following feats of arms :—

Storm of Allighur—September 4, 1803.
Battle of Delhi—September 11, 1803.
Battle of Assaye—September 23, 1803.
Siege of Asseerghur—October 21, 1803.
Battle of Laswarree—November 1, 1803.
Battle of Argaum—November 29, 1803.
Siege and storm of Gawilghur—December 15, 1803.
Defence of Delhi—October 1804.
Battle of Deig—November 13, 1804.

Capture of Deig—December 23, 1804.
War of Nepaul—1816.
Battle of Kirkee and battle and capture of Poona —November 1817.
Battle of Seetabuldee and battle and capture of Nagpoor—November and December 1817.
Battle of Maheidpoor—December 21, 1817.
Defence of Corygaum—January 1, 1818.
War in Ava—1824–6.
Siege and storm of Bhurtpoor—January 1826.

The following are the particulars of the medal :—

*Obverse*—Wyon's head of Victoria, with the inscription "Victoria Regina."
*Reverse*—Victory, seated. A palm-tree in front of her.
*Ribbon*—Sky blue.
*Clasps*—Twenty-three in number.

It is curious to note that the reverse bears the date 1799–1826, though the above list of engagements restricts the years to 1803–26. This is due to the fact that the list was revised after the dies had been put in hand, and certain of the earlier battles were deleted on the advice of the Duke of Wellington.

A second Indian General Service medal was issued in 1854 and subsequently as conditions demanded. It should be mentioned that the authorities had grown to view the constant striking of fresh medals for Indian service with a certain amount of disfavour, and the standard design was introduced in order to

prevent a multiplicity of patterns. The measure may have proved satisfactory to those in authority, but it certainly had grave disadvantages of a more or less obvious character. The ribbon, for instance, was similar through all the years of the issue, and when worn with undress or civilian clothes conveyed little meaning. The following clasps were issued:—

Pegu; Persia; North-West Frontier; Umbeyla; Bhootan; Looshai; Perak, 1875; Jowaki, 1877; Naga, 1879; Burma, 1885, 1887, and 1889; Sikkim, 1888; Hazara, 1888 and 1891; Chin-Lushai, 1889; Samana, 1891; North-West Frontier, 1891; Hunza, 1891; Lushgai, 1889; Wazeristan, 1894.

The value of the piece varies considerably, according to the clasps provided with it.

The description of the second Indian General Service award is:—

*Obverse*—Wyon's head of Victoria, with the inscription "Victoria Regina."

*Reverse*—Victory crowning a naked warrior.

*Ribbon*—Three strips of red and two of blue, all of equal width.

Another general medal, first issued in the early fifties, was the South African medal. It will be remembered that in 1850–3 certain British regiments were engaged in putting down Kaffir risings. When a decoration was struck for them, Queen Victoria decreed that the soldiers who fought in the earlier

Kaffir risings in 1834 and 1846–7 should also receive the award. The design, which was the same for all, bore the Wyon head on the obverse, and a crouching lion with the words "South Africa" and the date "1853" on the reverse. The ribbon was orange, streaked with four blue lines.

For the 1834 campaign, the 27th, 72nd, and 75th Foot regiments were decorated. For the 1846–7 campaign, the recipients were the 7th Dragoon Guards, the Rifle Brigade, the 6th, 27th, 45th, 79th, 90th, and 91st Foot regiments. For the 1850–3 campaign, the following were honoured: the 2nd, 6th, 12th, 43rd, 60th, 73rd, 74th, 91st Foot, the Rifle Brigade, the 12th Lancers, and various Marines. By noting the recipient's regiment, engraved on the medal edge, it is possible, in most cases, to decide for which particular campaign the award was made.

It may be convenient to state here that the South African decoration was re-issued in 1877–9. The design was similar to the original, except that the exergue contained a picture of Kaffir arms instead of the date "1853." With this issue clasps bearing the following years were given: 1877, 1878, 1879, 1877–8, 1878–9, and 1877–8–9.

The next medal was that presented for the Baltic. It was given largely to the Navy, but the Army received its share, as the letter here quoted from Mayo plainly shows:—

"ADMIRALTY, *June* 5, 1856.

Her Majesty having been graciously pleased to signify Her commands that a medal shall be granted

to the Officers and Crews of Her Majesty's ships as well as to such Officers and Men of Her Majesty's Army as were employed in the operations in the Baltic in the years 1854–5, the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty hereby give notice of the same."

The obverse of the award was again embellished by the familiar head engraved by Wyon, whilst the reverse depicted Britannia seated. The inscription "Baltic, 1854–1855," surrounded her. The ribbon was yellow, flanked with narrow edges of blue.

After the Baltic came the Crimea award. This is certainly one of the finest productions which the London Mint has ever given us. The well-known picture of Victoria filled the obverse, whilst a splendid allegorical group, depicting Victory crowning a Roman soldier, ornamented the reverse. The clasps were more decorative than usual, taking the form of elongated oak-leaves held in position by minute acorns. They were five in number and bore the designations of Alma, Balaklava, Inkerman, Sebastopol, and Azoff (the latter only for naval victories). The ribbon was light blue, edged with yellow.

The medal commands but a very low price—considering how important was the victory which it commemorates—unless it bears the bar for Balaklava. If provided with this honour, and engraved for one of the cavalry regiments which took part in the famous charge, its value is considerable.

The last award to be paid for by the Honourable East India Company was the Indian Mutiny medal of 1857–8. This, of course, is one of the finest pieces

which could enter the medallist's collection, yet it is procurable for a very modest sum, unless it bears the clasp for the Defence of Lucknow, when it is somewhat costly. The obverse shows Victoria's profile, as before, whilst the reverse displays Britannia seated on a lion, with the word "India" printed around the edge. The ribbon is silver grey, with two bars of red. The clasps are five in number: Delhi, Defence of Lucknow, Relief of Lucknow, Lucknow, and Central India. The medal was presented, generally, to soldiers in the 9th Lancers and the Bengal Horse Artillery, besides many civilians.

In 1867–8, a medal for Abyssinia was minted. In some measure it was an interesting award, as the usual head of Victoria was superseded by another design, engraved by J. S. Wyon and A. B. Wyon. In this case the royal features were portrayed within a small circle, which was surrounded by a star having nine points. In the angles formed by the points of the star the letters A-B-Y-S-S-I-N-I-A were printed. The reverse was a simple circular wreath. There were no clasps, and the ribbon—silver grey and red in colour—was passed through a circular ring, joined to the medal by a royal crown fashioned in silver.

In 1869, a much-belated decoration was struck for distribution among the soldiers and sailors who fought against the Maoris in New Zealand in 1845–7 and 1860–6.

The expeditionary force was landed in 1845, in order to uphold the rights of British settlers, who complained that after purchasing allotments of land they were denied their title. The Maori chiefs dis-

claimed all knowledge of such practices, but when a British magistrate presented a formal complaint to a certain Wairau chief, he was murdered. This seems to have been a signal for other native chiefs to rise and maltreat the Europeans generally. The British force, it may be added, only arrived in time to prevent a wholesale massacre of the settlers from the Motherland.

The obverse of the medal bore a new head of Victoria, wearing widow's weeds; the reverse showed a wreath, and the inscription "New Zealand, Virtutis Honor: 1846–65." For reasons which are not clear, a few pieces were struck bearing no date. The ribbon was blue and red.

As the historical incidents relating to the medals of recent issue are generally known, it will only be necessary in the following cases to describe the designs of the medals themselves.

**Canada,** 1866–70.—Yet another profile of Queen Victoria, with inscription "Victoria Regina et Imperatrix." On the reverse, a wreath of maple-leaves and a Canadian ensign. Clasps—Fenian Raid, 1866; Fenian Raid, 1870; Red River, 1870. Ribbon—two bars of red and one of grey.

**Ashanti,** 1874–94.—Still another profile of Queen Victoria, with inscription "Victoria Regina." The reverse bore a group of British soldiers fighting savages in a wood, the work of E. J. Poynter, R.A. Clasps—Coomassie; 1887–8; 1891–2; 1892; 1893–4. Ribbon—yellow and black.

**Afghanistan,** 1878–80.—Another profile of Queen

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THE SUTLEJ MEDAL.

THE PUNJAB MEDAL.

THE THIRD INDIAN GENERAL SERVICE MEDAL.

Victoria, with inscription "Victoria Regina et Imperatrix." On the reverse, a fine picture of Indian soldiers proceeding through a mountain pass, in which an elephant is prominently displayed. The sketch was made by Randolph Caldecott. Clasps — Ali Musjid; Peiwar-Kotal; Charasia; Ahmed Khel; Kabul; Kandahar. Ribbon—green and plum.

**Cape of Good Hope General Service.**—On the obverse, Victoria with widow's weeds and small crown. On the reverse, the words "Cape of Good Hope," surmounting a lion and unicorn. Clasps—Bechuanaland; Basutoland; Transkei. Ribbon—blue and yellow.

**Egypt**, 1882–9.—Head of Victoria, as on the Ashanti medal, on obverse, and sphinx, with inscription "Egypt, 1882," on the reverse. Clasps—Alexandria; Tel-el-Kebir; Suakin; El Teb; Tamaai; El Teb-Tamaai; The Nile, 1884–5; Abou Klea; Kirbekan; Suakin, 1884; Tofrek; Gemaizah; Toski, 1889. Ribbon—grey and blue.

**North-West Canada**, 1885.—Obverse, as for Egypt. Reverse, maple wreath, and inscription "North-West Canada, 1885." Clasp—Saskatchewan. Ribbon—grey with two red stripes.

**West Africa**, 1890–1900.—Head as in previous case. Reverse, British soldiers fighting savages in a forest. Seventeen clasps. Ribbon—black and yellow.

**Matabeleland**, 1893.—A fresh head of Victoria on the obverse, and a wounded lion, with the inscription "Matabeleland" on the reverse. No clasps. Ribbon—orange and blue in seven stripes.

**Central Africa**, 1894–8.—Medal as for West Africa.

One clasp. "Central Africa, 1894–8." Ribbon—plum, silver, and black.

**Third India General Service Medal,** 1895–8.—Victoria in widow's weeds on obverse, and a British and Indian soldier grasping a standard on reverse. Six clasps. Ribbon—yellow green and plum red.

**Sudan,** 1896.—Head and shoulders profile of Victoria on obverse, and on reverse a winged figure of Victory grasping a flag in either hand and "Sudan" printed beneath her feet. No clasps. Ribbon—a thin red stripe separating two wide bars of yellow and black. There is also a Khedive's Sudan medal which British soldiers have permission to wear.

**East and Central Africa,** 1897–9.—Obverse, as for Sudan. Reverse, Britannia pointing to the rising sun. A lion accompanies her. Clasps—Lubwa's Uganda; 1897–8; 1898; Uganda, 1899. Ribbon—orange and red in two wide bars.

**China,** 1900.—Victoria in profile on obverse; a pile of arms, a shield, a palm-tree, and the Latin quotation "Armis Exposcere Pacem" on the reverse. Clasps—Taku Forts; Defence of the Legations; Relief of Pekin. Ribbon—a wide red band flanked with yellow edges.

**First South Africa,** 1899–1902.—The Queen's head on the obverse, as in previous case. Victory offering a laurel crown to an army of British soldiers. Twenty-six clasps. Ribbon—orange flanked with blue, which in turn is flanked with red.

**Second South Africa,** 1901–2.—The first campaign medal to bear King Edward's profile. Reverse, as for previous award. Clasps—South Africa, 1901;

South Africa, 1902. Ribbon—equal strips of green, silver, and orange.

**Ashanti**, 1900.—Obverse, as for second South Africa. Reverse, a lion trampling on native weapons, and a scroll with the word "Ashanti." Clasp—Kumassi. Ribbon—three strips of black and two of green.

**East African General Service**, 1900–4.—Obverse, as before. Reverse, Victory, with a lion, pointing to the rising sun. Fourteen clasps. Ribbon—black, yellow, and green bars.

**Fourth India General Service**, 1901–2.—Obverse, as before. Reverse and ribbon, as for the third India General Service medal. Clasp—Waziristan, 1901–2. Ribbon—three strips of crimson and two of green.

**Tibet**, 1903–4.—Obverse, as before. Reverse, the heights of Tibet crowned by a fortress. Clasp—Gyantse. Ribbon—green, silver, and plum colour.

# IX

# MILITARY DECORATIONS AWARDED FOR SPECIAL SERVICES

# CHAPTER IX

## MILITARY DECORATIONS AWARDED FOR SPECIAL SERVICES

The necessity for special awards—The Victoria Cross—The Order of Merit—The "Distinguished Conduct in the Field" award—The Distinguished Service Order—The Meritorious Service award—The Long Service and Good Conduct award—The "Best Shot" medal—Volunteer decorations—Other decorations

THE reader who has noted the facts set out in the two previous chapters will remember how, in the earliest days of medal awarding, the general plan was to decorate none but the soldiers who had performed exceptional service, and that, as time wore on, the idea developed into granting medals to all who took part in warfare, irrespective of the merits of each individual. The latter plan must certainly be considered the more satisfactory, for personal bravery is so frequent a quality displayed on the battlefield that all who take part in these life-and-death struggles should, of necessity, receive a token of the King's recognition.

But though the granting of campaign medals was a step in the right direction, it tended to level up the ordinary brave soldier and the soldier possessing exceptional merit, and this, of course, was a principle

unsympathetic to English feeling. Accordingly, we find that running side by side with the campaign medals are decorations for special merit. Undoubtedly the most popular and the most coveted of all such awards is the V.C.

The Victoria Cross was instituted by a Royal Warrant of January 29, 1856—during the Crimean War, in fact—and its inception was largely due to the thoughtfulness of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort. The cross itself is severe and plain in design, but loses nothing on this account; it was formerly struck from the metal of old cannon taken in the campaign against the Russians, but to-day we can only claim that its metal composition once formed part of artillery pieces of some kind or other. The pattern is too well known to need description, but it may be added that the shape and design were modelled on the Peninsular gold cross. The ribbon is crimson for the Army and blue for the Navy.

The Victoria Cross may be won by soldiers of all ranks; when awarded to non-commissioned officers and privates it carries with it an annuity of £10, though this sum may be increased in special cases. If the medal be sold during the life-time of the recipient the pension can be withdrawn, and if the possessor be convicted in the civil or military courts for any but trivial offences, the same punishment may be enforced.

There are many rules regulating the granting of this coveted award; the following are perhaps the most interesting:—

"It is ordained that the cross shall only be

awarded to those officers or men who have served Us in the presence of the enemy, and shall then have performed some signal act of valour or devotion to their country.

"It is ordained with a view to place all persons on a perfectly equal footing in relation to elegibility for the decoration, that neither rank, nor long service, nor wounds, nor any other circumstance or condition whatsoever, save the merit of conspicuous bravery, shall be held to establish a sufficient claim to the honour.

"It is ordained that in the event of a gallant and daring act having been performed by a squadron not under 50 in number, or by a brigade, regiment, troop, or company in which the admiral, general, or other officer commanding such force may deem that all are equally brave and distinguished, and that no special selection can be made by them; then in such case, the admiral, general, or other officer commanding, may direct, that for any such body of sailors or soldiers, one officer shall be selected by the officers engaged for the decoration; and in like manner one petty officer or non-commissioned officer shall be selected by the petty officers and non-commissioned officers engaged; and two seamen or private soldiers or marines shall be selected by the seamen or private soldiers or marines engaged respectively for the decoration, and the names of those selected shall be transmitted . . . to the admiral or general officer commanding, who shall in due manner confer the decoration as if the acts were done under his own eye."

There has been much discussion of late as to whether bars are ever awarded with the Victoria Cross. Undoubtedly, these additional marks of valour are at times given, but instances where they have been received are rare. It should perhaps be stated definitely, that where a second act of sufficient bravery is performed before the cross is conferred, details of the second act are engraved with details of the first upon the rear of the medal, but where the second act is carried out after the medal has been conferred, a bar is awarded and the £10 grant increased to £15. The fourth clause of the Royal Warrant of January 29, 1856, makes this point quite clear:—

"It is ordained that any one who after having received the cross shall again perform an act of bravery which, if he had not received such cross, would have entitled him to it, such further act shall be recorded by a bar attached to the ribbon by which the cross is suspended, and for every additional act of bravery an additional bar may be added."

The brave deeds which have been rewarded by grants of the Victoria Cross make thrilling reading, but space cannot be spared here for recounting the most stirring of them. A brief description of each award is given in Mr. D. Hastings Irwin's book "War Medals and Decorations," whilst Mr. Philip A. Wilkin's "History of the Victoria Cross" also contains much valuable information. Before turning to the next medal, it may be interesting to add that crosses are often granted after death; a case in point

was that of Lord Roberts's son who fell at Colenso in 1899.

Another decoration awarded for bravery is the Indian Order of Merit, which was instituted in 1837. Unlike other awards, it was divided into three classes; the third class being granted for the first conspicuous act of gallantry, the second class for a repetition of such act, and the first class for a third instance.

The decoration was made in three patterns, each of which was one and a half inches in diameter. The shape was an eight-rayed star. The centre of the award consisted of two crossed swords, around which was written "Reward for Valour," on a background of blue enamel.

The first-class decoration was made in gold and bore a gold wreath; the second-class was silver with a gold wreath; and the third-class, silver with a silver wreath. All were to be worn on the left breast. A money grant formed part of the award, and it is worth noting that the widow of a recipient drew the annuity for three years after her husband's death.

A third decoration for bravery is the "Distinguished Conduct in the Field" award. This was instituted by Royal Warrant on June 4, 1853, for sergeants, and by a later warrant (December 4, 1854) for all non-commissioned officers and privates. The decoration was given to mark "the Sovereign's sense of the distinguished service and gallant conduct in the field of the army then serving in the Crimea" and since. By an amending warrant of February 7,

1881, a bar could be earned by performing a subsequent act of gallantry. The methods of selecting recipients was as follows:—

The commanding officer of each cavalry regiment could, if he thought fit, select one sergeant, two corporals, and four privates for decoration, whilst an officer of an infantry regiment could select one sergeant, four corporals, and ten privates. The award originally carried with it a grant of £15 in the case of sergeants, £10 in the case of corporals, and £5 in the case of privates—sums which were banked until the time when the soldiers took their discharge.

The medal was fashioned in silver; the obverse bore a military trophy of arms in the centre of which was the shield of the reigning sovereign, whilst the reverse was lettered "For Distinguished Conduct in the Field." The ribbon was red, blue, and red in equal strips. It was worn on the left breast.

The medal, as now awarded, bears a profile of the reigning monarch instead of the trophy of arms, and recipients are offered either a gratuity of £20 on discharge, or an increase of sixpence per day on their pension allowance.

In 1886, the "Distinguished Service Order" was instituted. The initial Royal Warrant affecting this order, under date of September 6, 1886, said: "Whereas we have taken into our royal consideration that the means of adequately rewarding the distinguished service of officers in our naval and military services who have been honourably mentioned in dispatches

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THE QUEEN AND KING'S SOUTH AFRICAN MEDALS, 1899–1902.

(The same reverse was used for both pieces.)

are limited. Now, for the purpose of attaining an end so desirable as that of rewarding individual instances of meritorious or distinguished service in war, we have instituted a new naval and military order of distinction which we are desirous should be highly prized by the officers of our naval and military services."

The order consists of a gold cross shaped out of a circle of conspicuous and pleasing design. The metal is gold, but the surface is enamel-coated. The predominant colouring is white, but a gold edging, a green wreath, and a red centre lend effectiveness to the design. Both faces are decorated, the obverse with a crown, and the reverse with the royal cypher. The ribbon, which is crimson edged with blue, is bounded both top and bottom by a gold bar.

The last award to be mentioned here for brave conduct is the Meritorious Service medal, which is now superseded by the "Distinguished Conduct in the Field" medal. This award received royal sanction in 1845 for the Army, and in 1849 for the Marines. The warrant said:—

"We deem it expedient to afford a greater encouragement to the Non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers of Our Army who may have distinguished themselves, or who may have given good, faithful, and efficient service.

"It is our further will and pleasure that a sum not exceeding £2,000 a year be distributed for the purpose of granting annuities as rewards for distinguished or meritorious service to Sergeants who are now, or who may be hereafter in the Service, either

while serving or after discharge with or without pension, in sums not exceeding £20 which may be held during service, and together with pension."

The medal earned but little popularity as it was awarded, not only for bravery, but for exemplary conduct in peace times. Now the "Distinguished Conduct in the Field" medal was preferred in cases of bravery, and the "Long Service and Good Conduct" medal was preferred in cases of exemplary conduct: thus its use was limited, and the authorities withdrew it a few years after the first issue.

The Long Service and Good Conduct medal was the earliest award which could be earned in times of peace. It was first issued on July 30, 1830, by William IV. The obverse bore a military trophy of arms and the King's escutcheon, whilst the reverse was inscribed "For Long Service and Good Conduct." The most recent copies bear a profile of the royal sovereign on the obverse. The ribbon is crimson.

The medal was intended for non-commissioned officers and men who had been discharged in receipt of gratuities after serving twenty-one years in the infantry or twenty-four in the cavalry. To-day, eighteen years' exemplary service only is required, and there is a gratuity of £5 on discharge.

Special regulations at the outset affected the granting of the "Long Service" medal to the Marines. The Commandant of the Division of Royal Marines, the warrant ran, may annually recommend a certain number of men of meritorious

conduct for the "Good Conduct and Long Service" medal with a gratuity as follows:—

Sergeant who shall have served ten years as such £15.

Corporal who shall have served seven years as such, £7.

Private, £5.

The men to be recommended must have completed twenty-one years of actual service, have borne an irreproachable character, and have never been convicted by a court-martial.

In 1867 a decoration was instituted for the "Best Shot" in the Infantry Regiments. It was awarded annually by competition, and carried with it a money grant of £20. As the award was discontinued in 1883, specimens are rare, and seldom available for purchase.

The obverse of the medal bore Poynter's draped profile of Victoria, whilst the reverse showed Fame placing a wreath on the head of a warrior. The earlier copies are found in bronze, the later ones in silver. The ribbon was somewhat gaudy, consisting of seven strips, three narrow ones of black, white, and black, then a wide one of red, and finally three more narrow ones of black, white, and black.

Volunteer decorations are numerous and one or two collectors of our acquaintance have specialized in them and gathered together series of much value and interest.

The earliest Volunteer specimens which we have seen are those which came from corps raised during

the Napoleonic times of trouble, especially those which dated from the period when an invasion of England was feared.

At this time there were some hundreds of volunteer corps throughout the land, many of them were only small organizations, it is true, but the old lists tell us that the volunteers aggregated some 500,000 men in all. The force as a whole was well organized and well equipped, and proficiency was encouraged by the granting of medals and decorations. These awards were not granted by Royal Warrant but by the patrons of each corps, though official sanction was always obtained previously. On this account we may look upon the medals as properly authenticated specimens well worth collecting.

Most of the volunteer medals which we have seen of this period bear dates between 1776 and 1816, whilst many of them are highly artistic and ornamental. We have seen specimens given by the following corps—the names are worth mentioning if only to show the quarters in which the bodies were raised :—

The Bank of England Volunteers.
The Bermondsey Volunteers.
The Broad Street Ward Volunteers.
The Essex Volunteer Cavalry.
Hans Town Association Volunteers.
Loyal Cork Volunteers.
Sadler's Sharpshooters.
Walthamstow Volunteers.

Of recent Volunteer awards the Volunteer Officers'

Decoration is probably the best known. The Royal Warrant which proclaimed its issue, under date of July 25, 1892, said:—

"Whereas it is Our Royal desire to reward for long and meritorious service of Officers of proved capacity in Our Volunteer Force: Now for the purpose of attaining this end, We have instituted, constituted, and created, and by these presents to Us, Our Heirs and Successors, constitute and create a new decoration which we are desirous should be highly prized by Officers of Our Volunteer Force: and We are graciously pleased to make, ordain and establish the following rules and ordinances for the Government of the same which shall from henceforth be observed and kept."

Then followed eight clauses, of which the following is the chief:—

"It is ordained that no person shall be eligible for this Decoration nor be nominated thereto unless he is or was a Commissioned Officer and has served twenty years in Our Volunteer Force, is recommended by the Commanding Officer of the Corps in which he has served, and is duly certified by the District Military Authorities in which the Corps is located as having been an efficient and thoroughly capable Officer, in every way deserving of such decoration: Provided nevertheless and We do hereby declare that half of any time during which an Officer of Our Volunteer Force may have served in the ranks of Our said Force shall reckon as qualifying service towards the twenty years required as aforesaid."

The decoration consisted of a striking oval badge: the edge was a silver oak wreath, whilst the royal cypher and crown, in outline, filled the centre. A green ribbon was provided with a silver bar flanking its topmost edge.

Two years after the officers' decoration received sanction a similar award, known as the "Volunteer Long Service Medal," was provided primarly for the men. The medal was granted to all Volunteers—including officers who had served in the ranks, but who had not qualified for the previous medal—on completion of twenty years' service in the Volunteer Force, provided that they were actually serving on January 1, 1893, and that the commanding officer recommended such award. Service in the Militia or Imperial Yeomanry could be reckoned towards the required period of years.

The obverse of the medal bore a profile of the reigning sovereign (in the case of Queen Victoria, the bust was designed much after the style of that chosen for the Jubilee silver coinage); the reverse consisted of a scroll, with the words "For Long Service in the Volunteer Force" arranged among palm and laurel sprays. The medal was silver, and the ribbon green.

The last decoration with which we shall deal at length is the National Rifle Association's medal, which was awarded to the best shot in the Volunteer Force. There were three pieces, one each of gold, silver, and bronze, which could be competed for annually. The awards were instituted in the year 1860.

The medal was of very fine design. The obverse revealed a bygone English soldier in possession of a bow, and a volunteer holding a rifle; both figures were standing. The reverse bore a circular wreath, within which the words "The National Rifle Association" and the date were inscribed.

There are other decorations which it is well to mention by name. They are:—

1. The Imperial Yeomanry Long Service Medal, which demands ten years' service and ten trainings.
2. The Militia Long Service Medal, which is granted to non-commissioned officers and men who have served eighteen years and completed fifteen trainings.
3. The Territorial Force Efficiency Medal, which has taken the place of one of the Volunteer medals mentioned above.
4. The Jubilee Medal.
5. The Coronation Medal.
6. The Military Cross, awarded for Distinguished and Meritorious Service.

# X

# MILITARY MEDALLIONS

# CHAPTER X

## MILITARY MEDALLIONS

General considerations—The "lost wax" process—Hadrian's medallions—Renaissance examples—Simon, the medallist—Wyon's work—Public collections—Some noted medallions described

FROM the days when Roman militarism dominated the world down to the present time, the deeds of successful soldiers have been commemorated by the striking of medallions. Needless to say these metal pieces, which so admirably recall the outstanding events in war and soldiery, are highly prized by antiquarians, and the labour spent in gathering together a collection of them is richly rewarded.

Medallions have been fashioned from all the usual metals, but gold, silver, copper, bronze, and lead have been generally employed. The processes followed in making them have been as numerous as the metals: ordinary casting was, at one time, the favourite method, but striking, engraving, and hand modelling have all been employed in turn. Mediæval medallists often resorted to the "lost wax" [1] process, and extremely fine work they were enabled to turn out by this means.

[1] Perhaps it will be well to briefly explain this system of founding, as it is not generally understood. Adeline in "The Art Dictionary," p. 243, describes it as follows:—

The earliest medallions date from very remote times, but the Hadrian era may be considered the period in which these souvenirs of memorable actions first became popular. From Hadrian's time to the fall of the Roman Empire they were struck to commemorate every deed of note, but after the decline we hear little of them until the Renaissance, when such Italian artists as Pisano and Guaciolotti revived their popularity. From the Renaissance onwards, the art of medallion-making flourished in Italy under the guidance of Benvenuto Cellini, of Albert Dürer in Germany, and of Jacques Primavera in France, but it was not until the time of Henry VIII that English workers turned their attention to this pleasing way of marking important military and civil events. Of course, we find medallions commemorating glorious deeds which took place in periods other than those mentioned; in such cases, the pieces were probably struck long after the occurrence took place.

It is a little difficult to know what specimens to include and what to exclude from a collection of

"A process of bronze founding in which the core is covered with an accurate representation of the object to be cast in wax, the wax being of the intended thickness of the metal. The wax is then coated with a porous clay, and the whole mass is put in a pit and baked. During the process of baking the wax melts and runs off through apertures left for the purpose. The space left after the wax is melted is occupied by the metal. This, the oldest method of bronze founding, is probably the best, and in the present day it is being pretty generally adopted. In the method, which for some time has been in vogue, the core was made of the exact size of the object to be cast and afterwards pared down, so as to leave space for the metal to run in between the core and the mould."

medallions, as there are no official issues, and as any metal worker can flood the market with original designs of his own or with facsimiles of rare and ancient strikings of bygone artists. Personally, we think that any medallion which is artistically fashioned and which commemorates an event of interest to us is worth adding to the collection, but, of course, we must learn to know the difference between an original and a counterfeit specimen. This, however, is too intricate a science to explain here, but can be learnt from works written by numismatists, with a fair amount of application.

No catalogues exist of the English medallions issued since Henry VIII's time, but the pieces which are the most interesting were struck by :—

1. Simon, who grew to fame in the reign of Charles II. He engraved the royal seals and executed many fine medallions.

2. Rawlings.

3. The Wyon family. William Wyon, the most renowned of at least three engravers of this family, engraved the royal seals, the Peninsular medals, and the dies for the first postage stamps, besides many medallions of a military and civil interest.

Collectors of these metal souvenirs should examine the exhibits in the British Museum and the Royal United Service Museum, whilst an occasional glance in the windows of Messrs. Spink & Sons in Piccadilly will often reveal specimens of more than ordinary interest. This well-known firm issue a monthly circular which contains much of interest

to the reader who is intent on adding valuable specimens to his collection.

A few illustrations depicting some of the most noted medallions may be given with advantage.

The specimen below, one of the oldest in existence, was struck in gold to commemorate the glorious

deeds of Julius Cæsar. Speaking of the medallion, Plutarch says:—

"Julius Cæsar, on his return to Rome, after having won a successful issue at the Battle of Pharsalus, was named the 'Liberator, the head of the Fatherland, the permanent dictator,' and received for the first time, the title of Emperor. The Senators, wishing to reward him for the humane treatment which he accorded those who fought against him, during the civil wars, erected a temple of Mercy, circular in shape, supported by six columns, in the middle of which is the figure of 'Concord' holding in the right hand the horn of Plenty and in the left a spear."

The first medallion given on this page was struck to commemorate the victory gained by William III

at the Battle of the Boyne. The obverse shows a familiar portrait of the King, whilst the reverse depicts him in the act of crossing the river at the head of his troops.

The next medallion shows James II on the obverse, and an orange-tree laden with fruit by

the side of an old oak, falling to the ground, on the reverse. The piece was evidently struck to

commemorate the fall of James II, and the supremacy of the House of Orange.

The fourth medallion is one of the numerous specimens which were struck to do honour to Marl-

borough and his victorious army. The obverse shows Prince Eugène and the Duke, who are likened to the Roman deliverers, Castor and Pollux. On the reverse, a picture representing the rout of the French and the surrender of Marshal Tallard at Blenheim is given.

The fifth piece illustrated here was struck to com-

memorate the Battle of Ramilies. On one side the battle is represented at the moment of victory; on the other is an emblematic representation of the union of England and Holland. Behind the figure of England, on a pillar inscribed with the first three letters of his name, stands a bust of Marlborough, and opposite is another of D'Ouwerkerke.

Another specimen in the Marlborough series is given below. The obverse represents Marlborough

SALVTARIVM · SIDERVM · APPARITIO ·
EVGENII · ET · MARLEBO · RVGII · FELIX · CON · IVNCTIO ·
MVLT · MILL · GALLORVM · CLADES · AD · ALDENAR · MDCCIIX · D · IX · IVL ·

and Eugène as Castor and Pollux whilst the reverse presents a view of the battle and town of Oudenarde.

INSVLA · FLANDR · GALLIS A FOEDERATIS EREPTA
INDEFESSA VIRTVTE IN · VICTISSIMI · EVGENII · SAB · PRINCIPIS · MDCCIX
SPES HOSTIVM PER TERRITORIVM PRAECISA ·
PRVDENTIA FORTIS DVCIS MARLEBVRG · OBSIDIONEM INSVLANAM PROTE GENTIS ·

The medallion given at the foot of the previous page was struck to commemorate the surrender of Lille in 1708. Victory is shown, on the front face, taking the civic crown from the head of a prostrate female, who represents the city of Lille, whilst the under face depicts Britannia, with the Ægis, striking France with terror.

The eighth medallion commemorates the Battle of Dumblane.

The ninth medallion was struck in honour of the

A CHECK TO CORSICAN ASSURANCE.

By Cruikshank.

victory gained at the Battle of Dettingen on June 27, 1743, whilst the tenth, given below, commemorates the victory of Minden, gained on August 1, 1759.

# XI

# MILITARY PRINTS

# CHAPTER XI

## MILITARY PRINTS

The period 1750–1860—Works including military prints—Where to search for bargains—The kind of print most sought after—Works including fine military prints—Bunbury—Gillray

IN the following notes we do not propose to go deeply into the lore of print collecting, as the matter is too involved for treatment in these pages, and also because such admirable books as "Chats on Old Prints," by Arthur Hayden, already cover the ground. Here we propose to talk of military prints as they affect the general collector of military curios.

Printed pictures of soldiers and soldiery are to be found dating back almost to the days of Caxton, but those coming within the period 1750–1860 seem to be the most interesting. Probably this is due, in the main, to three reasons. First, the period was one of much military unrest, and people's interests were largely centred on the army. Secondly, the costumes of the various regiments were attractive and showy, and lent themselves to pictorial treatment. And thirdly, the art of printing had reached a stage when reproductions were no longer so expensive as to be almost prohibitive in price.

Most of the prints which we have seen of this period were originally published as illustrations to books, a good number were issued as sets in portfolios, whilst a few were sold separately. The books which contain these military pictures, especially when the latter are coloured, fetch high prices, but fortunately the collector can become conversant with these gems of the printer's art in such treasure-houses as the British Museum and the South Kensington Museum. Those of us who can afford to buy perfect copies of such illustrated works will find admirable collections for sale at Messrs. Maggs Brothers, in the Strand; Messrs. Robson & Co., in Coventry Street, W.C.; and Messrs. Henry Sotheran & Co., in Piccadilly.

But though these works, illustrated with military prints, are costly, the collector of moderate means may gather together quite an extensive collection of the pictures, torn from the complete works, at no great outlay. It may seem surprising to all of us who are curio-lovers but it is a fact that there are still people who are so ignorant of the value of books and pictures that they will snatch out the illustrations from priceless volumes and sell the former for a few coppers, throwing away the letterpress. Only the other day we were talking with a friendly collector who showed us a batch of Ackermann's coloured plates which he had obtained for a few pence each, although the actual value was, at the least, half a guinea per copy.

The collector, therefore, must be on the look-out for bargains of this nature; he will find them in the

NAPOLEON'S CARRIAGE ARRIVING AT THE LONDON MUSEUM.

By Cruikshank.

portfolios which usually encumber the doorways of the second-hand booksellers in Charing Cross Road, Praed Street, Museum Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, and the stalls along Farringdon Road. In these interesting quarries he will assuredly make discoveries from time to time; so he will if he keeps an eye on establishments of a similar nature in the outskirts of London.

A few general words on the value of military prints may be of interest. Those which depict types of soldiers are generally more sought after than those representing battle scenes; those of noted commanders are, of course, valuable, but representations of little-known commanders, wearing perhaps court rather than military dress, are not in much demand. Pictures in which soldiers play a minor part are also of little interest to the collector of military curios, as there is always a possibility that the uniforms have been drawn more with the idea of being picturesque than accurate. Machine-coloured pictures are, of course, highly treasured, as they give a much better idea of the uniforms than do monochromes. When hand-coloured there is no guarantee of correct impression; in fact such pictures are often glaringly misleading.

Having made these preliminary remarks, it may be well to point out some of the best-known works containing military prints.

"The British Military Library," published not later than 1801, in two volumes, contains some score or more of accurately drawn plates representing types

of the British Army. They are well executed, though the figures appear a trifle stiff and wooden.

Spooner's "Military and Naval Uniforms," by Mansion and Eschauzier, seventy plates in colour, dating from 1833. These are probably some of the finest representations of early nineteenth-century uniforms that the collector can possess. The dresses are accurately depicted, but the artists do not excel when drawing galloping horses.

Ackermann's "Costumes of the British and Indian Armies," by various artists. Some sixty odd coloured plates, dating from 1840. The plates include not only the uniforms of the regular Army, but also the Indian Army and the Volunteer Force. This is a very fine collection.

Cannon's "Historical Records of the British Army." A monumental work in sixty-eight volumes, but the coloured plates are occasionally found loose. The pictures are in two series: (*a*) Cavalry, and (*b*) Infantry; they depict regimental dress of the period 1837–53.

W. Heath's "Military Costumes of the British Cavalry." A set of sixteen coloured plates, of the year 1820.

E. Hull's "Costumes of the British Army in 1828." Some seventy odd lithographs of fairly pleasing character. They appear to be drawn with complete accuracy.

"Military Costumes of Europe." A work published in two volumes in 1822. Nearly a hundred coloured plates are included, about a quarter of which are of British uniforms.

Thomas Rowlandson's "Loyal Volunteers of London" (1799). A most interesting work full of coloured plates showing the uniforms of the non-regular units at the close of the eighteenth century. Students of military dress should pay special attention to this interesting gallery of pictures.

Lieutenant-Colonel Luard's "History of the Dress of the British Soldier." Fifty uncoloured and not very attractive plates (1852). The work contains much interesting matter in the letterpress, however, and the plates, though plain, are useful to students of military dress.

Ralph Nevill's "British Military Prints" is of recent production. (*The Connoisseur* Publishing Co., 1909, 5s.). This work contains a sumptuous array of coloured and uncoloured reproductions of old prints, many of which are far more attractive than the originals. It is a book that the student should undoubtedly possess.

So far, the prints of which we have spoken have all been of a serious nature, but the period under consideration was marked by the rise of two clever caricaturists, named Henry Bunbury and James Gillray, who require some mention. The works of these two artists are but little known, in spite of the fact that some authorities consider them equal to any of the satirical efforts of the famous Hogarth. Bunbury and Gillray are of interest to the collector of military prints because many of their pictures dealt with soldiers and soldiering. We cannot claim that the detail of the uniforms which figure in all

the pictures of these two artists are absolutely correct, but they certainly do not display any glaring errors which are likely to mislead.

Bunbury was a friend of Sir Joshua Reynolds and also of Hoppner, he thus moved in the artists' circle of the day. "During the time he was living in Suffolk, he was prominently associated with the County Militia; and no doubt it was at this period that ideas for humorous military sketches presented themselves. 'The Militia Meeting,' 'Recruits,' and 'The Deserter' may be mentioned among these, while a story is told in connection with another sketch that is characteristic of Bunbury's readiness with his pencil. A young private of his regiment applied for a pass in order to visit the lady of his affections. The application having come before Mr. Bunbury, he not only signed the pass, but drew a comical sketch on the permit, representing the meeting of the amorous couple, to the great amusement of the officers to whom the pass was presented.

"In 1778, political relations between England and America were very strained, in consequence of which militia camps were formed in various parts of the country. Henry Bunbury, as an officer of the Suffolk Militia, was ordered to join his camp at Coxheath. All sorts of caricatures from all sorts of pencils (most of them anonymous) satirize the military mania of the time. Naturally Bunbury was not behind the rest, and many sketches of a military character, evidently drawn by him at this time, are still in existence. Bunbury's wonderful talent in making these sketches of a martial kind appears

to have been recognized at the time, for an exhibition of his military drawings was organized in 1788 and held at Somerset House."[1]

Gillray, the second artist mentioned above, was the son of a soldier who fought at Fontenoy, and thus his thoughts were constantly turned to military subjects. Though his satirical drawings dealt with the various topics of the day—his works were published between 1777 and 1815—he seems to have lost no opportunity of showing his spleen for the French, and Napoleon in particular. We have a long list of such artistic effusions of which the following may be mentioned:

1. Fighting for the Dunghill: or Jack Tar settling Citoyen François.
2. Buonaparte, hearing of Nelson's victory, swears by his sword to extirpate the English from off the Earth.
3. General result of Buonaparte's attack upon Ibrahim Bey's Rear Guard.
4. Britannia between Death and the Doctor.
5. The Surrender of Ulm: or Buonaparte and General Mack coming to a right understanding.
6. The New Dynasty: or the little Corsican gardener planting a royal pippin-tree.
7. Apotheosis of the Corsican Phœnix.

In the foregoing, we have merely touched upon the subject of collecting military prints, but enough has been said in these few pages to show that this

[1] Herbert Ewart, in *The Connoisseur*, June 1903, pp. 87–8.

branch of curio-hunting is full of fascination and deep interest and is well worth the attention, not only of readers who possess artistic feeling, but of those who are desirous of adding to their store of knowledge concerning the military dress of bygone periods.

A SINGULAR TRAIT OF BUONAPARTE'S FAVOURITE MAMELUKE.

By Cruikshank.

XII

# MEMORIAL BRASSES OF MILITARY INTEREST

## CHAPTER XII

### MEMORIAL BRASSES OF MILITARY INTEREST

Classes of military brasses—Rubbings, and how to make them—Floor brasses: their characteristics—Palimpsest brasses—What may be learnt from brasses—Mural tablets

IN many of our churches and public buildings are to be found numerous memorial brasses which possess undoubted interest for the collector of military curios. These memorials of the dead largely fall into two classes: those which are let into floors, and those which are fixed to walls. The former class, as a rule, are of some antiquity, are memorials to individuals rather than to groups of soldiers, and are to be found almost entirely in churches. The latter class are modern, are often erected to a number of soldiers, and are located in such public buildings as town halls and guild halls as well as churches. The floor brasses, as a rule, are flat but often deeply engraved, whilst the mural tablets are lightly engraved and frequently embellished with a sculptured framework.

To obtain facsimiles of memorial brasses, many collectors take "rubbings" of them, much after the fashion that children imitate coins by superimposing

a sheet of paper and running a soft pencil over the covered surface.

The necessary outfit for making a rubbing consists, first and foremost, of a permit obtained from the proper authorities, a supply of heel-ball, as sold by any leather dealer or cobbler, a small clothes brush, a duster, and some paper. The latter must not be too flimsy nor too stout, and it must be large enough to cover the brass. A roll of light grey wall-paper usually serves admirably, but there are times when the width of the roll is too narrow for the brass. In these cases, a full-size sheet of paper as used by printers should be procured.

The first operation is to wipe away all dust and foreign matter from the metal surface; this is a very necessary precaution when the tablet is a floor-inset. The next thing is to place the sheet of paper in position; if the memorial is fixed to the wall, the sheet must be held by an assistant, or at the expense of much arm-aching by the person who does the rubbing; if the tablet is let into the floor, two weights placed at the head of the brass serve the purpose admirably.

The actual rubbing should be performed by drawing the heel-ball lightly across the brass. The movement should always be made in the same direction, or the lines will appear scratchy and confusing. It is best to complete a little patch first, and not go over the whole area before finishing any part of it; if this be done, there will be more chance of completing the work without shifting the paper. It is not a bad idea to force the paper by means of the

palm of the hand into the recesses of the brass before commencing to rub; this will help to keep the sheet from moving.

Some collectors make their rubbings intensely dark, that is, they do not leave off when the brown stage has been reached. Others are content to stop rubbing when the detail is just visible, completing the work at home by filling all the flat areas with a wash of Indian ink. Either plan is good, but the former is more useful in cases where the tracery is involved, whilst the latter provides a somewhat smarter effect when carefully executed.

Rubbings may be stored in cardboard tubes, one in each tube, but many enthusiasts mount their black pictures on canvas and rollers. The latter plan is certainly the better one, but it is an expensive and tedious business which will not appeal to all. Small rubbings, it need hardly be added, make capital pictures for framing, looking very attractive if a white margin is preserved, and the frame made of a narrow black moulding.

Floor brasses were first used on the Continent, many originating in Flanders and some in Brittany. The earliest specimens in England date from the thirteenth century, though Beaumont states that the finest specimens belong to the fourteenth century. He also mentions that the fifteenth-century specimens were small, thin, and more ornate, whilst in the sixteenth century the art became debased by a surfeit of commonplace specimens. The majority of the English brasses are located in the Eastern

Counties and the Home Counties, where, in fact, stone was not easily and cheaply obtained.

The most curious of all floor brasses, the same writer states,[1] are those which are called palimpsests. These were originally laid down to the memory of a certain individual, but were subsequently taken up, re-engraved, and then used to commemorate some one else. Nearly all are post-Reformation—a fact which speaks for itself.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, the abbeys fell into decay, and any engraver who wanted a brass appears to have taken it from the nearest ruin and adapted it to his requirements.

Palimpsest brasses were readapted in three ways:—

1. Plates were re-engraved on the reverse side.

2. The old figure was used again without alteration, a new inscription and shield (if any) being added.

3. The original engraving was modified, fresh lines and shading being introduced to adapt it to contemporary fashion.

One of the finest examples of this latter kind of palimpsest brasses is a specimen which was made to honour the memory of Sir Walter and Lady Curson, at Waterperry, Oxon. The original was engraved in 1440, but subsequently altered to suit the style of armour and costume which prevailed in 1527.

Another interesting palimpsest is mentioned by Fairbank.[2] "It occurs in Ticehurst Church, Sussex. It has been made use of to commemorate John

[1] Beaumont, in "Memorial Brasses," p. 140.

[2] F. R. Fairbank, in *The Connoisseur*.

THE OLDEST ENGLISH BRASS.

To the memory of Sir John D'Abernon.
Date 1277. At Guildford, Surrey.

Wyborne, Esquire, and his two wives. The second wife, his widow, made her will in 1502, and she ordered a stone to be placed over herself and her husband ; and this is what the executors did. They took a small slab bearing a brass figure of a man in armour, which had been engraved about 1365 ; there was no room for figures of the two wives of the same size as the figure already there, so they had a small figure placed on each side, little larger than half the size of the central one, and replaced the original inscription by one commemorating John Wyborne, who died 1490, and his two wives ; their figures were engraved about 1510."

Brasses are of great educational value in so much as many reveal interesting points in connection with matters concerning dress and armour. But the student is warned against putting too much trust in the dates which they bear, for specimens were often laid down before the death of the person whose memory they perpetuate. The date of death and the style of decoration might thus be, in such cases, at variance historically. Beaumont says:[1]—

"Examples of this feature are to be found at Thame, Oxon, and Lambourne, Berks. This is especially noticeable in the case of shroud brasses, which were generally engraved and fixed during the lifetime of the person commemorated, the object being to remind him of his final bourne ; in these cases blank spaces were usually left for the insertion of the date of death."

[1] "Memorial Brasses," p. 5.

A BATTLEFIELD SOUVENIR PICKED UP ON THE PLAINS OF FLANDERS.

(The same helmet is shown with and without the cloth covering.)

The earliest English brasses were shaped around the figures they portrayed, and if canopies or frames were added, these were fitted in separate pieces. All foreign brasses and later English ones, however, were cut into rectangular pieces. These and other such indications are the surest guides to the true date of construction.

Among the thousands of brasses in this country, many of which are of military interest, the following are worthy of mention :—

1. At Felbrigge, to the memory of Sir Symon Ffelbrygge ; date, 1416. He is dressed in plate armour, and holds the Royal Standard. His garter is prominently shown. A canopy surmounts his figure.

2. At Trumpington. This is a favourite specimen with Cambridge undergraduates.

3. At Trotton, Sussex, to the memory of Thomas Camoys and Elizabeth, his consort ; date, 1419. Camoys achieved fame at Agincourt ; his wife was a Mortimer. A canopy surmounts each figure.

4. At West Hanney, to the memory of Humfrie Cheynie ; date, 1557. This brass is peculiar ; the figure, which is small, stands on a metal rectangle bearing a scriptural text. A rectangular metal frame is placed around the figure, but at some distance.

5. At Ilminster, to the memory of Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham ; date, 1609. Nicholas is given a ringed cuirass and lamboys over his mail skirt. He stands upon a tablet bearing an in-

scription which explains that he was the founder of Wadham College, Oxford.

Of later mural tablets we need say but little, for there is hardly a cathedral or parish church in the kingdom which is not the proud possessor of one or more specimens. As a rule, these memorials point to the valorous deeds which soldiers of the neighbourhood have performed for their King and country. The South African War, it will be remembered, added considerably to their number, whilst the conflict now raging has already made its contributions.

# XIII

# AUTOGRAPHS OF GREAT SOLDIERS

## CHAPTER XIII

### AUTOGRAPHS OF GREAT SOLDIERS

The fascinations of autograph collecting—Points which influence the value of an autograph—Autographs classified—A "Schomberg" letter—The notes scribbled by Airey at Balaklava—General hints—Prices of autographs

NINETY-NINE out of every hundred autographs which find their way into collectors' albums are said to be those of actresses, who are popular favourites to-day but not to-morrow. As a consequence, autograph collecting is seldom considered a serious hobby worthy of the attention of serious-minded people. This seems a great pity, for if letters and documents written and signed by real celebrities are collected, not only may much pleasure be gained from the pastime, but a great deal of instruction as well.

The wise collector will find that his best plan is to specialize in one definite direction, and if he follows our advice he will limit his interests to autographs of great soldiers. Perhaps he will argue that military signatures are so seldom met with, and so expensive to obtain when they are offered for sale, that his treasures will not accumulate fast enough. This, however, is a matter on which he

need have no fears, especially now that the great European conflict has created so vast an output of military correspondence.

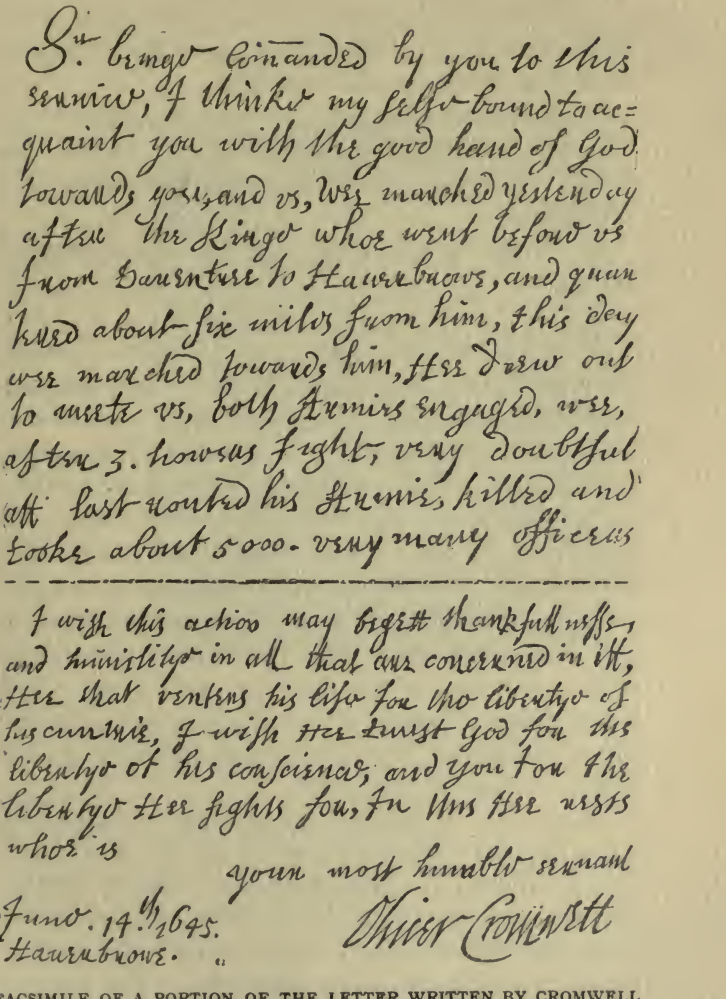
The value of an autograph naturally depends on a number of factors. The eminence of the writer is, of course, the first consideration, but the price will also depend on whether the signature is normally written, whether it was written before notoriety came to the writer, and the state of preservation of both paper and ink. Can the celebrity be considered a prolific letter-writer? This is another question which influences the value of an autograph, for according to the rarity of an individual's signatures, so will the price be affected.

We say, above, that the eminence of a writer is the first consideration in deciding the value of his signature. We should be very diffident, however, at explaining just what factors make for eminence. It certainly is not rank alone, nor even ability; perhaps we may best describe it as being in the "public eye."

The autograph-hunter does not seek for signatures alone: he casts around for entire letters, documents, and signed papers of every description; it is thus clear that the importance of the communication plus the autograph should be taken into account when pricing treasures.

For the sake of convenience, we may classify the specimens in our collections under the following heads:—

1. Signatures, unaccompanied by other written matter.



FACSIMILE OF A PORTION OF THE LETTER WRITTEN BY CROMWELL TO LENTHALL, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, ANNOUNCING THE VICTORY OF NASEBY.

(*From the original in the British Museum.*)

2. Signatures appended to short letters or documents; the body of the matter being typed, printed, or written by a private secretary.

3. Signatures appended to short letters or documents which have been wholly written by the celebrity in question. (Such are known to collectors as Holographs.)

4. As No. 3, but letters or documents of some length.

Of the above four classes, the specimens coming within the first are obviously the least valuable, for they are the most frequently met. Copies may be found on the fly-leaves of books, on photographs of celebrities, etc. The second class, unfortunately, is gradually ousting the third class, since the typewriter is speedily becoming universally used for all but private letters. Specimens in the second class are worth a trifle more than those in the first, and a great deal less than those of the third. Specimens in class 3 are those which the average collector should aim most at securing; those in class 4 are a trifle too unwieldy for all but the advanced collector.

There are, of course, many ways of arranging an autograph collection, but on no account should the specimens be fixed to the album without adding comments on both the subject-matter of the MS. and the identity of the author. The following letter is given as a specimen. The original is to be found in the Royal United Service Museum:—

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

A BATTLEFIELD SOUVENIR.

The mug bears two verses of poetry which are somewhat significant, as they reveal the character of the Tyrolese peasant and soldier. Translated, they run as follows :—

Eagle, Tyrolese eagle,
Why are you so red?
Is it from the sunshine?

Is it from the red sparkling wine?
It is from the red blood of my enemies
That I am so red.

"LISBURNE, *6th March*, 1689.

GENTLEMEN,

I have this day written another for the Battering Gunns and Morters to be Sent over hither. But now having the Matter under further consideration doe think it Expedient and necessary for their Majesties Service to send an Express herewith And it is to direct you Immediately on Receipt hereof to cause Eight guns of Eighteen and Twenty Foure Pounders with all their Equepage, Furniture and Stores with A good Proporcon of Boms to be Shipped on Board a very good, light and Nimble Saylor. And that the Capt. or Master be Ordered to Sayle with them directly for the Lough of Bellfast. For that wee cannot undertake with any sort of Reasonable Accomodacon the Siege of the Fort of Charlemount untill those Gunns arrive here. And with worke I would gladly have furnished before his Majesties coming hither wherefore I pray use all Dilligence and Expedicon in dispatching away thence the said Shipps so Fraighted as is herein afore Expressed.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your very loving friend and servant,
SCHOMBERG."

The letter, we must add, is written in a splendidly clear hand by a clerk, and signed by Schomberg. It therefore belongs to class 2 above.

Under such a document, we might comment as follows: Note the quaint grammatical forms, also the spelling which clearly shows that orthography

was not an exact science two hundred odd years ago. The use of capital letters is also curious. Lastly, we may point out the apparently effeminate ending given to the letter.

As to the identity of Schomberg, we might write: "Marshall Schomberg was one of William III's generals who took part in the Irish campaign against James II. He captured Carrickfergus, Belfast, Newry, and Dundalk, although his troops consisted of raw levies. During the Battle of the Boyne he assisted William in gaining a brilliant victory, but was unfortunately slain towards the end of the encounter."

As one would expect, the subject-matter of a letter greatly affects its value. The following epistle, written by Lord Dorchester, is therefore of more than ordinary consideration.[1]

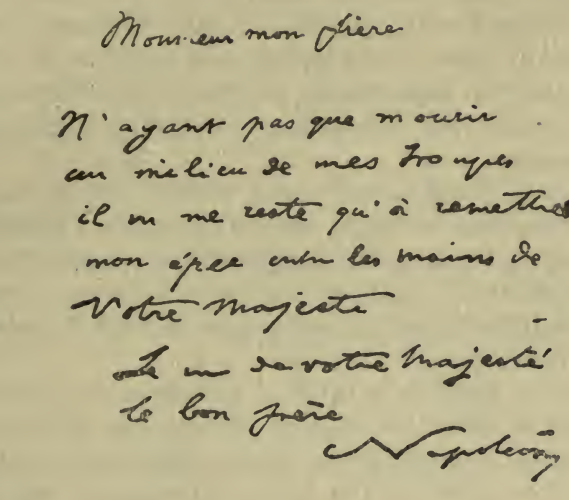
"CULFORD, *Dec. 9th*, 1803.

DEAR FOX,

I was only in town for four days and besides the hurry which always attends such a visit to London, I was under the necessity of going to Court on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, which put it out of my power to call on you.

From the contemptible effort of the insurrection itself in point of numbers and characters of persons concerned, to the wish of which no importance could have been attached in the minds of the public, but for the unfortunate murder of the worthy and truly

[1] The original may be seen in the Royal United Service Museum.



*Translation.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Not being allowed to die among my troops, it only remains for me to place my sword in the hands of your Majesty.

I am your Majesty's good brother,

NAPOLEON.

SEDAN, *Sept.* 1, 1870.

AUTOGRAPH LETTER WRITTEN BY NAPOLEON III TO WILLIAM I OF GERMANY AFTER THE BATTLE OF SEDAN.

respectable Lord——, and for the still more contemptible preparation of arms, or plan of operations on the part of the Rebels, it did not appear to me that any blame could be attached either to the civil or military departments of the Irish Government for not having taken more efficient precautionary measures.

From the documents you transmitted to me, it is clear that no blame can be imputed to you, and from my intimate knowledge of some of the persons confidentially employed in the civil line, I should with difficulty believe any charge of want of activity or capacity in that quarter.

It is certainly a mark of weakness in a government to create unnecessary alarms, and it has the ill effect of shaking the public confidence. In this business, however, the Irish administration appears rather to have erred on the other side, but I am persuaded that this error proceeded from a recollection of the mischiefs which a very contrary line of conduct had produced a few years ago in that unfortunate country.

I shall send your papers by the Coach by my Porter in Town, and direct him to forward them to you.

Believe me, with great regard,
Dear Fox,
Most Faithfully Yours,
CORNWALLIS."

Of still greater value are the following priceless notes, scribbled in pencil during action, by Major-

General Sir Richard Airey, K.C.B., Q.M.G., and sent to the Earl of Lucan who commanded the cavalry division at Balaklava, October 25, 1854.

"(*a*) Cavalry to take ground to left of 2nd Line of redouts occupied by Turks.

RD. AIREY,
*Q.M.-Genl.*"

"(*b*) Cavalry to advance and take advantage of any opportunity to recover heights. They will be supported by Infantry which has been ordered to advance on two fronts.

R. AIREY."

"(*c*) Lord Raglan wishes the Cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, follow the enemy and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the Guns. Troop of Horse Artillery may accompany. French Cavalry is on your left. Immediate.

R. AIREY."[1]

Before concluding these notes we may give some general hints.

Preserve all fascimile signatures which are to be found; they are useful for purposes of comparison when doubtful originals come along.

The signature should never be cut from a document; the whole sheets should be preserved.

An original letter ought not to be pasted on to

[1] These three most interesting autograph notes are also to be seen in the Royal United Service Museum.

the album. It is far better to fix it in position by slipping it under "ears" or bands of paper pasted to the pages.

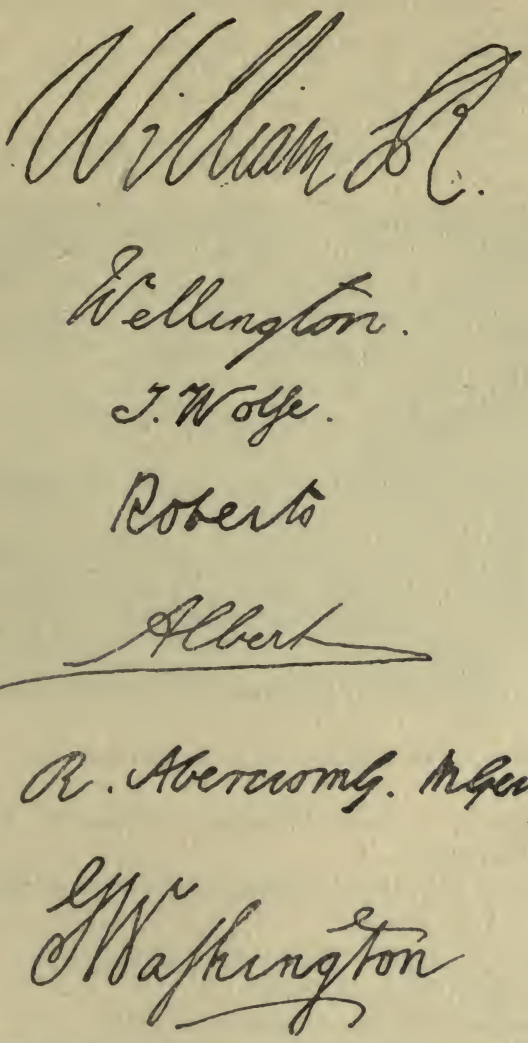
To restore a faded signature, dab it carefully with a solution of hot tincture of gall containing a trace of dissolved potassium chlorate. When dry, dab it with a pad moistened in ordinary lime water. The process is simple, but it is well to experiment on a useless specimen before treating valuable ones.

Valuable documents which are torn and perhaps crumbling may be prevented from deteriorating further by sandwiching between two sheets of glass, and binding with passe-partout edging.

In deciding whether a document is genuine or not, the composition of the ink and the texture of the paper should be taken into consideration. Forgers find great difficulty in matching papers made more than fifty years ago.

Great care should be used to discriminate between the autographs of people possessing similar names (e.g. Kitchener, the writer on cookery matters, must not be confounded with Kitchener, the soldier).

Lastly, it may be useful to give a list of some of the prices realized by military and allied autographs at public sales, etc., in order that the collector may gain some rough idea of the value of his treasures. (A.L.S. means Autograph letter, signed; D.S. means Document, signed; L.S. means Letter, the signature only of which is in the handwriting of the celebrity.)



William of Orange.
Duke of Wellington.
General Wolfe.
Earl Roberts.
King Albert of Belgium.
General Sir Ralph Abercromby.
George Washington.

SOME AUTOGRAPHS OF NOTED SOLDIERS.

*Abercromby, Sir Ralph.*—British general; killed in Egypt, 1801. D.S., 8s. 6d. A.L.S., with portrait attached, £2.

*Allen, Capt. Wm.*—Of the Niger Expedition. A.L.S., 2s.

*Alva, Ferd. Alvarez, Duke of.*—Spanish General; oppressed the Netherlands; executed the Counts Egmont and Horn. L.S., two guineas.

*Amalfi, Duke of.*—Imperial marshal commander-in-chief after Wallenstein. Died, 1656. L.S., 14s.

*Anne, Queen.*—D.S., a Privy Council Letter; signed also by Buckingham, Schomberg, and nine other peers, 10s. 6d.

*Auchmuty, Sir Samuel.*—English general; died, 1822. D.S., 4s.

*Barkstead, Colonel John.*—Cromwell's Governor of the Tower, executed 1662. D.S., 10s. 6d.

*Barrington, Viscount.*—Secretary of War; died, 1793. A.L.S., 3s. 6d.

*Beaver, P. Capt.*—With Nelson at Trafalgar. A.L.S., 5s. 6d.

*Blücher.*—The famous Prussian field-marshal. L.S., 9s.

*Bonaparte, C. Louis Napoleon.*—Emperor. A.L.S., two guineas.

*Burnaby, Capt. Fred.*—Author of "A Ride to Khiva." A.L.S., 3s. 6d.

*Charles I.*—King of England. D.S., £2 10s.

*Cromwell, Oliver.*—D.S., £9.

*Dorchester, Lord Guy Carleton.*—L.S., 5s.

*Egmont and Horn, Counts.*—Executed by Duke of Alva. L.S., signed by both. Sixteen guineas.

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AN OLD MUG BEARING THE FAMOUS PICTURE DEPICTING "THE DEATH OF WOLFE."

*Gordon, General.*—Killed in the Soudan. A.L.S., two guineas.

*Kempenfelt, Admiral.* — Perished in the Royal George. D.S., one guinea.[1]

[1] H. T. Scott, "Autograph Collecting," Part iii.

## XIV

## WAR POSTAGE STAMPS

## CHAPTER XIV

### WAR POSTAGE STAMPS

The earliest war stamps—Stamps used in the Crimean War—The British Army Post Office Corps—The Sudan Expedition—The South African Campaign—The Great War—Recent war stamps and post-marks—Indian war stamps—Other war stamps

AMONG the many thousand varieties of postage stamps which philatelists treasure few can compare in point of interest with those which have carried letters from the firing line to the fireside. Such specimens are sought after not merely by the stamp-collector, but by the general collector of military curios.

War postage stamps date back to the middle of the sixteenth century, their originator being a certain Johann von Taxis who, a few years before the death of Martin Luther, obtained permission to carry letters from civilians in Germany to members of a German expeditionary force then fighting in Italy. The frank marks which this royal prince applied to the correspondence entrusted to him, constitute the first war postage stamps of which we have any record.

Of British war stamps, probably the earliest specimens are those which came to England on the

letters written by the soldiers who fought in the Crimea. Soon after the British army was landed on the shores of the Black Sea, the Government sent out eleven postal officials, who established a head office at Constantinople and branch depots at Balaklava and Scutari. The staff was properly equipped with all the necessary impedimenta for maintaining a postal service between the expeditionary army and the people at home. Letters from England were received and transmitted to the various regimental headquarters; mails for the Mother-country were gathered in and sent on their journey westwards, whilst supplies of unused adhesive stamps were retailed to the soldiers at the three offices mentioned above.

The stamps which the officials sold comprised the following then current British specimens :—

1d. red, 1841 issue, no perforations, with small crown as watermark.

1d. reddish-brown, 1855 issue, perforated, with large crown as watermark.

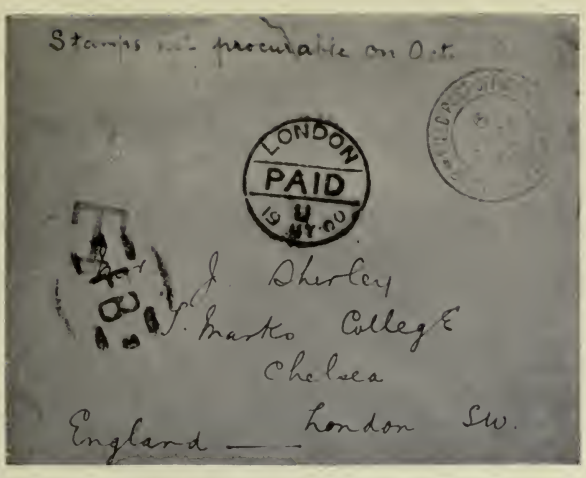
2d. blue, 1841 issue, no perforations, with small crown as watermark.

2d. blue, 1855 issue, perforated, with large crown as watermark.

4d. rose-carmine, 1856 issue, with large garter as watermark.

6d. lilac, 1854 issue, with embossed head.

Specimens of the above which franked the correspondence of members of the Crimean expeditionary




A SOLDIER'S COMMUNICATION POSTED DURING THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

A SIMILAR COMMUNICATION FROM "SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE."

force may be recognized by the distinctive obliteration marks which were as follows :—

1. A crown placed between two stars with straight bars above and below, the whole forming an oval.
2. A star placed between the cyphers; then as No. 1.
3. A circle containing the inscription "Post Office, British Army," together with the date.

In 1882, a British Army Post Office Corps was formed by Colonel du Plat Taylor for service under General Wolseley in Egypt. The men were chosen from the old 24th Middlesex, a regiment better known as the Post Office Volunteers. The party landed at Alexandria, but soon proceeded to Ismailia where a base was established. From these headquarters a number of field offices sprang up, but their positions altered as the army moved forward. There is no doubt that the duties performed by this postal corps gave much satisfaction, both to the troops and the authorities at home, for its services were again requisitioned when the Suakim expedition set out under the leadership of Sir Gerald Graham.

The stock of stamps taken to Egypt consisted of the current 1d. lilac and 2½d. blue of England, but those used during the expedition were obliterated by a hand stamp bearing either a number of dots shaped to form a small lozenge, or a circle containing the inscription "British Army Post Office, Egypt," and the date. Obliterations bearing dates in 1885 belong to the Suakim expedition.

When Kitchener went to the Sudan in 1897, the Egyptian Government set up a postal department at Wadi Halfa Camp for the special use of the British and Egyptian forces. The stamps sold on this occasion were the current Egyptian labels, but they were overprinted with the word "Soudan" in both French and Arabic. Unfortunately, many forged overprints have been added to genuine Egyptian stamps of the higher values, so that collectors must be cautious when purchasing specimens.

Of the work of the Army Post Office Corps in South Africa during the last Boer War much interesting matter could be written. Mr. F. J. Melville gives the following description in his capital book "The Postage Stamp in War" (price one shilling).

"Major Sturgeon was succeeded in the command of the Army Postal Corps by his second in command, Captain Viall. On the death of the latter in 1890, Captain G. W. Treble of the London Postal Service took the command, which he held at the outbreak of the South African War in 1899, aided by Captain W. Price (now Colonel W. Price, C.M.G., in command of the Army Post Office with the British Expeditionary Force in France) and Lieutenant H. M'Clintock, these latter officers belonging to the Secretary's Office of the G.P.O., London. A first portion of the company with Captain Treble left England with General Buller and his staff, and the rest followed on October 21st, and several further detachments went out with later

contingents. In South Africa they had a very wide area to cover. At the outset Captain Treble established himself with the headquarters of the Inspector-General of Communications in Cape Colony, and moved about keeping in close touch with the movements of the forces, an important part of his duties being to forward to the various offices the information necessary to ensure the correct circulation of the mails. Captain Price was at Cape Town, and Lieutenant M'Clintock at Pietermaritzburg.

"The British military mails were made up in the London G.P.O. in special bags addressed to the Army Post Office, and sent to the G.P.O. at Cape Town, in which building the detachment of the Army Postal Corps under Captain Price had established its base office. The bags containing military mails were handed over to the Army Base Post Office at Cape Town, whence they were distributed to the various military post offices established at the centres of the troops, and to field post offices with each Brigade or Division in the field. In the return direction the soldiers' letters were handed in at field post offices and forwarded through various channels, sometimes ordinary and ofttimes military, to the base at Cape Town, whence they were dispatched to England in the ordinary way."

Early in 1900, the average weekly mail from London to the Field Forces was 150 bags of letters, post-cards, etc., and 60 boxes of parcels; the incoming mail from the Field Forces was 11 bags of letters per week. In a letter dated from Cape Town, February 27th, from Lieutenant Preece, who went

out with reinforcements for the Army Post Office Corps in February, are some interesting glimpses of the difficulties of the work of this service :—

" Price, of the Post Office Corps, met us and told us (Captain) Palmer was to leave at once for Kimberley with 17 men, (Captain) Labouchere and (Lieutenant) Curtis to proceed on to Natal with 50 men, and I was to take the remainder ashore here (Cape Town) and stop to help at the base. At 9.30 on Monday morning I marched off with my 57 men to the main barracks, and bade good-bye to the good ship *Canada* and her merry cargo. After lodging the men in barracks I went off to the G.P.O., where I found Price and his 40 men ensconced in one huge wing, overwhelmed with work, and at breaking-down point. The mails every week increase now, and we have 250,000 pieces of mail matter to sort and distribute every week, over a country larger than France, among a shifting population of soldiers, each of whom expects to get his letters as easily as he gets his rations. It is a vast job, and we have done wonderfully so far with a totally inadequate staff."

For readers who require further details of the Army Post Office arrangements during the Boer War, it may be mentioned that the contemporary reports of the Postmaster-General contain very full and interesting accounts. Such reports, if out of print, can usually be perused in the better-class public libraries.

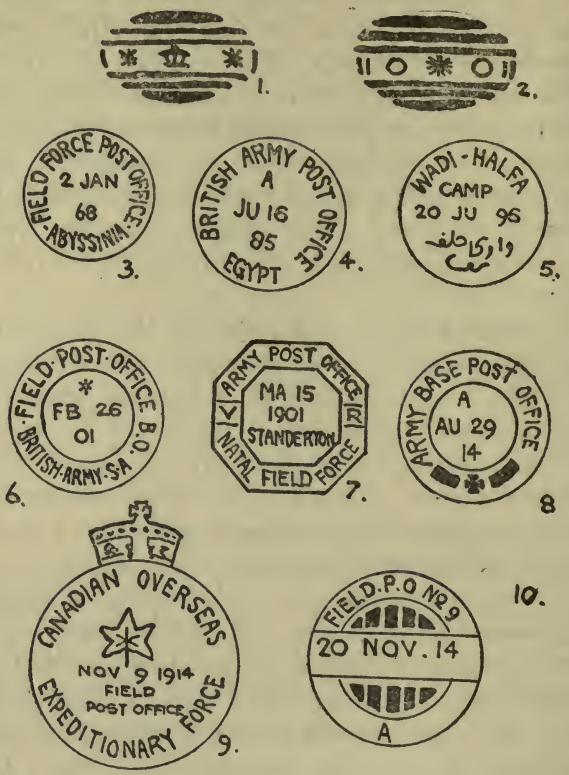
The stamps which franked the soldiers' letters were usually of the British lilac penny variety, bearing the familiar head of Queen Victoria, whilst the

obliterations were circular or hexagonal, and contained the inscription "Army Post Office, South Africa." But the bulk of the letters reached England with no adhesive stamp, the words, "On Active Service, no Stamps Available," proving a sufficient passport in cases where supplies were genuinely unprocurable. Envelopes which are stampless, but which bear one or other of the South African field postmarks, command a fair value, and copies should figure in every collection specially devoted to war stamps.

When Bloemfontein fell into the hands of the British the stock of Orange Free State adhesives was overprinted V.R.I. and, later on, E.R.I., and when the Union Jack was unfurled in Pretoria the stamps of the South African Republic were provided with similar overprints. All these labels were used by the civilians as well as the military authorities; and as many of the soldiers posted their communications in the ordinary letter-boxes, it is impossible to decide which possess a war interest and which do not.

Among the most treasured adhesives provided by the South African War are the "Mafeking Besieged" issues. As is well known, certain of these were produced by a photographic process and revealed the portrait of General Baden-Powell. Gibbons urges collectors to be wary in purchasing copies, as numerous well-executed forgeries emanated from Kimberley and Cape Town, and many officers and men returning home from the front were swindled by the dishonest dealers.

On the outbreak of the European War in August




SOME HISTORIC POST-MARKS USED ON MILITARY CORRESPONDENCE.

1. and 2. Crimean Postmarks.
3. Napier's Abyssian Expedition, 1867–8.
4. Egyptian Campaign, 1885.
5. Dongola Expedition.
6. and 7. South African War, 1899.
8. British Army in France, 1914.
9. Canadian ,, ,,
10. Indian ,, ,,

1914, the Army Post Office Corps again became active, and the quantity of letters and parcels which it was called upon to handle from the very outset must be described as prodigious.

It is quite impossible to record all the varieties of British military stamps and post-marks which have resulted from these hostilities, but they may be classified under the following heads :—

1. Stamps of the United Kingdom bearing post-marks indicating use in France, Belgium, and other foreign countries.
2. Post-marks of the Army Post Office at the base or in the field. There are numerous varieties.
3. Censor marks applied to envelopes, etc.
4. Postmarks applied to correspondence from prisoners of war and aliens' camps.

Of course, many interesting colonial varieties have also resulted from the war. The following are among the most highly prized :—

1. Gold Coast stamps obliterated with post-marks from Togoland.
2. German colonials from Samoa overprinted G.R.I.
3. New Zealand stamps bearing the overprint "Samoa."
4. German colonials from Togo overprinted "Anglo-French Occupation."
5. Canadian stamps obliterated with post-marks bearing the inscription "Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force."

6. Indian stamps overprinted I.E.F. (Indian Expeditionary Force).

Whilst speaking of Indian stamps, it may be appropriate to mention that the army postal service possessed by our troops in this Asiatic empire is probably the most carefully planned in the whole world. From a Field Service Manual [1] on "Posts and Telegraphs" we have been able to glean a few details respecting the organization and establishment of the Indian military post offices. In times of peace, a stock of tents and equipment sufficient for the supply of three base post offices, 50 first-class field post offices, 10 second-class field post offices, and for the supervising staff is kept in store at Lahore in the charge of the Postal Department of the Punjab.

On the outbreak of war the military postal service is organized by the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in India according to the requirements of the Army authorities.

The supervising staff is selected by him from a roll of European volunteers for such service maintained in his office, the full war establishment consisting of 6 Directors or Deputy-Directors, 18 Assistant-Directors, 24 Inspectors, and 50 Postmasters. The rest of the establishment is selected by the Postmaster-General of the Punjab.

One Director or Deputy-Director, two Assistant-Directors, and four Inspectors constitute the normal postal personnel of an Expeditionary Force. They

[1] Quoted from *Stamp Collecting*, December 5, 1914.

wear the ordinary field service uniform of the Indian Army according to their respective ranks, distinguished by the word "Post" on the shoulder-straps.

The following extracts from the Indian Army Order, No. 619, dated November 10, 1913, are of interest:—

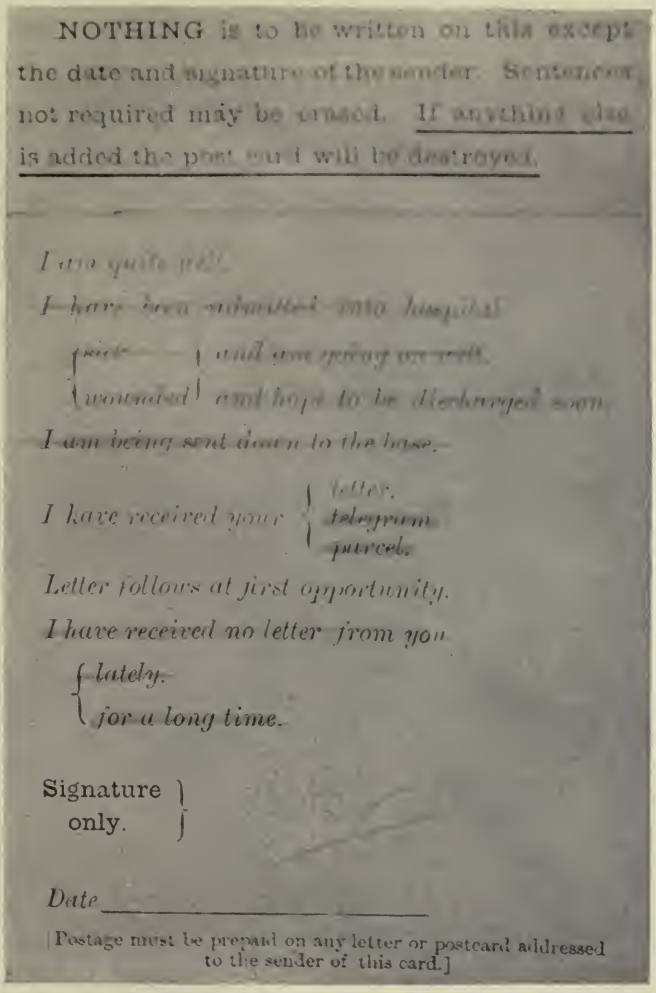
"7. The Director or Deputy-Director, or, in his absence, the Postmaster-General under whose orders he is to work, should, on receipt of the first intimation that a force is to be mobilized, take the earliest opportunity to consult the General Officer appointed to command the force, as to the postal requirements of the force in respect of the number of field post offices, the classes of postal business to be undertaken, the establishment to be provided, etc. As far as possible, the wishes of the General Officer commanding should be carried out.

"23. The Director-General will arrange that the treasury nearest to the base office is supplied with about ten times its normal supply of ordinary postage stamps (including post-cards and envelopes) together with a suitable supply of service stamps (including post-cards and envelopes); and that a sufficient stock is maintained throughout the campaign. The base post office should thus be in a position to supply at once the postage stamps required in the field post offices. If there is no treasury at hand, a sufficient supply of postage stamps of all descriptions must be kept at the base post office. The base post office will be supplied with an iron safe, or two, if necessary.

"24. The requisite stamps, scales, bags, and other

articles of stock sufficient for six months' requirements will be furnished to the base post office for its own use, and for distribution, under the orders of the Director or Deputy-Director, to field post offices. Section 5 B shows the books, forms, stamps, etc., required for field post offices. All books, forms, and articles of stock should be packed in the prescribed mule trunks, each of which, when packed, should not exceed one maund in weight. The books, forms, and stamps required by the base post office will be the same as those used by a head office in India performing the same classes of business; but in addition to the ordinary stamps it will be supplied with a special 'Postage cancelled' stamp."

Of foreign war stamps, the international quarrels of the last fifty years have produced quite an interesting array. Envelopes posted in Paris during the siege of 1870 bearing the words "Par Ballon Monté" are much prized by collectors. Less sought after are the Alsace and Lorraine stamps which were primarily issued for use by the invading German troops of 1870. Their low price is probably due to the fact that the dies were printed from long after the stamps were withdrawn from currency. From the Balkans we, of course, have many specimens which enrich our collections. Italy, also, has given us war stamps bearing the overprints "Bengasi" and "Tripoli di Barberia." If we turn to the United States, many interesting postal relics will be discovered of the Civil War, whilst numerous varieties of more recent stamps from the States are to be found showing



NOTHING is to be written on this except the date and signature of the sender. Sentences not required may be erased. If anything else is added the post card will be destroyed.

*I am quite well.*

*I have been admitted into hospital*
{*sick* / *wounded*} *and am going on well.*
*and hope to be discharged soon.*

*I am being sent down to the base.*

*I have received your* {*letter.* / *telegram.* / *parcel.*}

*Letter follows at first opportunity.*

*I have received no letter from you*
{*lately.* / *for a long time.*}

Signature only.

*Date* _____

[Postage must be prepaid on any letter or postcard addressed to the sender of this card.]

A POST-CARD RECEIVED FROM A SOLDIER IN FRANCE BEARING STEREOTYPED GREETINGS.

post-marks referring to the Spanish war in the Philippines and Cuba. Then there are Japanese adhesives which were used in China during the fighting which led to the peace of Shimonoseki, and, of course, the Japanese issues which the troops used whilst engaging the Russians must not be overlooked. Lastly, we may point to South and Central America, a continent where war labels are almost as plentiful as those issued in times of peace.

In the foregoing notes we have merely indicated, in a general way, the sources from which war stamps have emanated. Sufficient, however, has been said to show that these relics of strife and bloodshed provide material for the collector of a highly fascinating character.

XV

WAR
MONEY

# CHAPTER XV

## WAR MONEY

French obsidional notes—Mafeking notes—The Napoleonic assignats —Charles II and University plate—Mints at Carlisle, Beeston, Scarborough, Newark, Colchester, and Pontefract—Irish gun money

JUST as there are many postage stamps which owe their origin to the stern necessities of war, so there are a great number of coins, tokens, notes, etc., which have found their way into circulation as a result of the belligerent attitude of armies. All such examples of war money are extremely interesting and well worth collecting.

The conflict which is raging at the time of writing has already produced a certain amount of war money, notably in the northern part of France. In this area many small towns and villages have found themselves despoiled of their metal currency, with the consequence that paper money has been issued, under authority, to meet the temporary demands of the outraged inhabitants. Among the illustrations of this book, two such paper notes, coming from Epernay, are included; it is safe to say that in time to come these and similar issues will be much sought for.

Another interesting case of paper money which owed its inception to the needs of war is the Mafeking currency, issued by Baden-Powell during the famous siege by the Boers, which lasted from October 13, 1899, to May 17, 1900. The face value of the Mafeking notes was £1, 10s., 3s., and 1s., but copies now change hands at considerably enhanced prices.

The issue of paper money is no new idea; the French resorted to the practice in Napoleon's time, as they had also done during the life of the Republic which came into being on September 20, 1792. This latter body issued notes, termed "assignats," of five different denominations, ranging in value from about a sovereign to forty pounds. The assignats, it may be stated, were dishonoured by the succeeding Government, and people who held them lost their money. The writer possesses a few specimens which were given him, many years ago, by an old French lady whose family had fallen from affluence to humble circumstances solely through the dishonouring of these paper notes.

But the most interesting war currency which we have so far discovered is the obsidional money of the Great Rebellion of 1642–9. Historical data of this period is too well known to need repetition here, and it is sufficient to say that Charles, after he suffered defeat at Naseby, was forced to withdraw his troops to certain castles and towns throughout the land. From these strongholds he made occasional sallies, but a depleted exchequer always hampered his movements.

In order to obtain sufficient money to finance the

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MONEY OF THE GREAT REBELLION, 1642–9.

(1. Newark sixpence—2. Colchester gold half unite—3. Pontefract two-shilling piece—4. Ormond half-crown—5. Dublin crown of Charles II.)

Army, Charles begged the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to give him their collections of plate, which he intended to melt down and recast as silver currency. "The University of Oxford and the majority of its colleges sent their plate, which was safely conveyed to the King, but that of the University of Cambridge was not sent, although many of the individual colleges contributed theirs. The treasures of St. John's and Magdalen, however, never reached their destination, but were seized by Cromwell whilst in transit to Nottingham." [1] Charles had many wealthy followers, however, and these were only too ready to help on the cause of the Royalists by sacrificing their silver ware.

With such supplies of metal the King was able to establish mints at Carlisle, Beeston Castle, Scarborough, Lathom House, Newark, Colchester, and Pontefract. The money supplied by these mints was used for paying the soldiers and buying material; it was also more or less honoured in the surrounding villages.

"The coins were usually struck upon irregular pieces of plate, cut from trenchers, platters, cups, etc., of silver, in place of being struck upon flans specially prepared by melting down the plate. This is only what one would expect, under the trying circumstances in which the various garrisons found themselves placed. That this was the case is clearly proved by the many examples existing, upon which traces of the original decoration are still visible, in some instances even, particularly upon examples

[1] Dr. Nelson, "Obsidional Money of the Great Rebellion," p. 7.

issued at Scarborough, the rim of the dish being still to be seen at the edge of the piece.[1]

Dr. Philip Nelson tells us that about Christmas-time, 1644, the inhabitants of Carlisle were asked to take their silver plate to the mint, situated in the town, which they cheerfully did. The quantity of silver plate which was so obtained amounted to 1,162 oz. It was made up of the following items, which possess for the reader of to-day both a pathetic and an amusing interest. The item of "Widdow Orpheur, four spoons," truly a case of the widow's mite, and Sir Henry Fletcher's tankard, tumbler, and wine "bowles" strike us as being particularly worthy of note.

*May the* 13*th* 1645 — A List of All the Plaite Brought in to be Coyned with the Weight thereof.

| | oz. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Will: Atkinson. Alder one Winde Mill Boule, a Trencher salt & three spoones wt ... ... ... ... ... | 012 | ½ | 0 |
| Widdow Craister one beare boule one beaker one wine boule and six spoones wt ... ... ... ... | 024 | ¼ | 0 |
| Julien Aglionby one Boule wt ... ... ... ... | 008 | ½ | 0 |
| Edmond Kidd 2 Bowles wt ... ... ... ... ... | 015 | ¾ | 0 |
| Thomas Kidd one Boule wt ... ... ... ... ... | 007 | 0 | ⅛ |
| Will: Wilson Tenner one Bowle one Beaker wt ... ... | 014 | ½ | 0 |
| Thomas Lowrie 2 spoones wt ... ... ... ... | 002 | 0 | 0 |
| Robert Sewell one spoone wt ... ... ... ... | 001 | 0 | ⅛ |
| Collnell Kirkebride one bowle 4 spoones wt ... ... | 013 | 0 | 0 |
| Mary Carlile one bowle and 8 spoones wt ... ... ... | 015 | ¾ | 0 |
| Edward Dalton one bowle one Tumbler & 2 peeces of broken plate wt... ... ... ... ... ... | 022 | 0 | ⅛ |
| Mrs Chambers 2 beare boules and one wine boule wt ... | 034 | ¼ | 0 |
| Mr Glaisters 3 beare bowles & 6 spoones wt ... ... | 034 | ¾ | 0 |
| Widdow Baines Junior one bowle 2 spoones wt ... ... | 011 | ½ | ⅛ |
| Thomas Jackson one bowle & 2 spoones wt ... ... | 007 | ½ | ⅛ |
| Thomas Monke one bowle wt ... ... ... ... | 008 | 0 | 0 |

[1] Dr. Nelson, "Obsidional Money of the Great Rebellion," p. 8.

| | oz. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Josph Jefferson one bowle wt ... ... ... ... | 010 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr Edward Orpheur one bowle 4 spoons wt ... ... | 014 | ¼ | 0 |
| John Orbell 2 bowles one gilt bowle and 10 spoones wt ... | 040 | ¾ | 0 |
| Widdow Orpheur 4 spoons wt ... ... ... ... | 005 | ¾ | 0 |
| Mr Edward Fountaine one bowle one salt and 2 spoones wt ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... | 017 | ½ | 0 |
| Mr Richard Wilson 1 gilt bowle wt... ... ... ... | 008 | ½ | 0 |
| Thomas Craggill 2 wine bowles and 3 silver spoons wt ... | 015 | 0 | 0 |
| Henry Monke one beaker 4 spoons wt ... ... ... | 011 | ½ | 0 |
| Thomas Tallentyre one bowle 4 spoones wt ... ... | 013 | ¾ | 0 |
| Captaine Aglionby one bowle wt ... ... ... ... | 010 | ½ | ⅛ |
| Sir Thomas Glemham 2 Candlesticks wt ... ... ... | 044 | ¾ | 0 |
| Mr George Barwicke one bowle 6 spoones wt ... ... | 017 | 0 | ⅛ |
| Robert James one bowle wt ... ... ... ... ... | 008 | ¾ | 0 |
| Isabeil Holliday one sugardish wt ... ... ... ... | 011 | ¾ | 0 |
| Sir Henry Fletcher one tankard one salt 1 tumbler 2 wine bowles 6 spoones wt ... ... ... ... ... | 055 | ¾ | ⅛ |
| Capt : Cape 2 beare bowles 2 gilt salts one Colledge pott one Can gilt one gilt beaker wt ... ... ... | 089 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr Fredericke Tonstall one dozen ½ of plate wt ... ... | 145 | 0 | 0 |
| Mrs Tullie 5 spoones wt ... ... ... ... ... | 006 | ¼ | 0 |
| John Tomlinson one bowle wt ... ... ... ... | 008 | 0 | 0 |
| Edward James one bowle wt ... ... ... ... | 008 | ½ | ⅛ |
| Sr Will : Dalston one greate salt one lesser salt one bowle 8 spoones wt ... ... ... ... ... ... | 063 | ½ | 0 |
| Mr Leo : Dykes one bowle one Tankard 6 spoones wt ... | 030 | ¾ | 0 |
| Mr Lewis West 1 bowle wt ... ... ... ... ... | 009 | ¾ | ⅛ |
| Sr Tho : Dacre 2 bowles wt ... ... ... ... ... | 019 | ½ | 0 |
| Capt Johnson one Tankard one salt wt ... ... ... | 030 | 0 | 0 |
| The Citties plate 2 Flaggons 2 gilt bowles one gilt salt 2 beare bowles wt ... ... ... ... ... ... | 233 | 0 | 0 |
| | 1162 | ¼ | ⅛ |
| Received in plate 1162 oz – ¼ – ⅛ at 5s per oz Deliured to Mr Dykes 3001i resting in or hands 2311 – 0 – 3 stamped out of 1076 oz. – ½ – ⅛ at 6s per oz ... ... | 323 | 0 | 3 |
| Gayned by Coyning at 6s per oz ... ... ... ... | 42 | 8 | 4 |
| Lost in meltynge and working ... ... ... ... | 21 | 10 | 0 |

(Endorsed)

May the 13th 1645.
A note of
plate Coyned.

The Carlisle money had the appearance of roughly made coinage, but that coming from the Beeston mint was innocent of even such resemblance. At this mint, thin pieces of silver were cut into fragments, weighed and then stamped with whatever value tallied with the weight. Thus we find not only two-shilling pieces, shilling pieces, and so on, but sevenpenny pieces, tenpenny pieces, and pieces valued at thirteen-pence. There was, we may add, but one face to all these coins.

The Beeston money did not bear any wording to show that it was coined at this castle, but simply bore a stamped impression of the castle gateway.

The Scarborough mint was no better equipped than that at Beeston, and what we have said of the latter applies also to the former. There is just this to be mentioned of the Scarborough pieces: "The reverse of the coins is blank, save for the few specimens which bear engraved upon them the words OBS–SCARBOROUGH–1645, which engraving, however, may possibly not be contemporary with the siege, but may have been added subsequently, as a memorial, about the date of the Restoration."[1]

The Newark money was much better fashioned. It was not circular nor irregular, but lozenge-shaped. The front faces usually bore the royal crown, the letters C.R., and the value in pence, whilst the rear faces showed the date and the words OBS–NEWARK. There were no coins for odd amounts as there were at Beeston.

Colchester turned out various grades of money.

[1] Dr. Nelson, "Obsidional Money of the Great Rebellion," p. 18.

GUN MONEY OF JAMES II.

(1. Sixpence—2. Sixpence—3. Shilling—4. Shilling—5. Half-crown—6. Half-crown—7. Half-crown—8. Half-crown.)

The gold half-unite was circular and of fairly good workmanship, but the silver shilling and the silver nine-penny piece were shaped variously and poor in quality.

The best coinage of all came from Pontefract, where the siege money was struck not only for Charles I but also for Charles II. The designs were all enclosed within a circle, but the shape of the metal was circular, lozenge-shaped, and hexagonal. Both faces of the coins were ornamented.

Other siege money which we must note came from Ireland, and grew out of the rebellion, headed by Phelim O'Neill, which rose in 1641, when some forty thousand men, women, and children were cruelly massacred by the Confederated Catholics.

This self-constituted body—followers of Charles—drew up many decrees: we need mention here but one:—

"It is this day ordered by this assembly, that coin and plate shall be raised and established in this Kingdom, according to the rates and values hereafter mentioned, and that there shall be forthwith coined the sum of four thousand pounds, to pass currant in and through this Kingdom, according to a proclamation."

Accordingly, special coinage was struck at Kilkenny, Bandon, Kinsale, Youghal, and Cork, whilst Lord Inchquin and the Marquis of Ormond minted money which was popularly named after them. The Inchquin coins possess no claims to beauty nor even good workmanship, but the Ormond money is certainly bold in design and fair in construction.

Another interesting case of war money being coined arose out of the appearance of James II in Ireland during the early part of the year 1688. James had previously issued a patent for minting money to Sir John Knox, but on arriving in Ireland he seized the latter's coining apparatus and set up his own mints in Dublin and Limerick. A most interesting proclamation which he published in the year 1689 explained the measures he proposed to adopt for debasing the coinage; we give it *in extenso* :—

"Whereas, for remedy of the present scarcity of money in this our kingdom, and that our standing forces may be the better paid and subsisted, and that our subjects of this realm may be the better enabled to pay and discharge the taxes, excise, customs, rents, and other debts and duties, which are or shall be hereafter payable to us: we have ordered a certain quantity of copper and brass money to be coyned to pass currant in this our kingdom during our pleasure, in six penny pieces: each piece having on one side the effigies or figure of our head, with this inscription round JACOBUS II DEI GRATIA, and upon the other side, the stamp or impression of cross-sceptres and a crown between J.R. with VI above, the month wherein they are coyned below, with this inscription round, MAG. BRIT. FRAN. & HIBER. REX. 1689, and fringed round, each of the said pieces to be of the metal of copper and brass; all which pieces of money we have thought fit, by the advice of our privy council, to

make currant money within this our kingdom. We do therefore hereby publish and declare, by the advice aforesaid, that the said pieces of copper and brass coyned, or hereafter to be coyned by our said order marked and stampt as aforesaid, shall pass during our pleasure, as currant money amongst all our subjects within our realm, and in all payments to be made either to us, or from us, or to or from any of our subjects within this kingdom, according to the rates following: that is to say, each of the said pieces called six penny pieces, marked and stamped as aforesaid, to pass for six pence: the said pieces to pass at the rates aforesaid, for the interest which hereafter shall fall due for such mortgages and debts due by records, bills, bonds, or obligations, and likewise for any of the said principal debts so secured where the debtor or his goods are, or shall be taken in execution for the same, and we do hereby strictly charge and command all and every of our subjects of this kingdome to take and receive in all payments to be made to them (excepting as aforesaid) the said pieces of money according to the rates aforesaid, hereby declaring that such of our subjects within this kingdom as shall refuse the said pieces of copper and brass money at the rates aforesaid (excepting as aforesaid) being tendered to them for payment, shall be punished according to the utmost rigour of the law, as contemners of our royal prerogative and command. Provided always, that this our proclamation shall not be construed, to oblige any merchant or merchants, importing any goods into this kingdom, to receive

upon the first sale of such goods so imported, any of the said copper or brass money: And whereas we have caused the said copper and brass money to be made currant money for present necessity, and therefore do not intend that the same shall continue for any long time. We do, by this our royal proclamation, promise and engage to all our subjects here that as soon as the said money shall be decried and made null, that we shall thereupon receive from all and every our subjects within this kingdom such proportion of the said money as shall be, and remain in their respective hands at the time the same shall be so decried and made null: and at the same time either allow for the same to them the value thereof, at the rates aforesaid, out of what rent, duties or debts, they respectively shall owe to us, or to make them full satisfaction for the same according to the rates aforesaid, in gold or silver of the currant coyne of this kingdom. Given at our court, at Dublin-castle, the eighteenth day of June, 1689, and in the fifth year of our reign.

By the King."

A certain amount of trouble was, of course, experienced by the King in obtaining sufficient supplies of metal to meet his somewhat rapacious lust for coining. After his own stores were exhausted he cast around for additional supplies and the following candid letter reveals his method of procedure:—

"Our will and pleasure is, that you forthwith deliver to the commissioners of the mint those two

GUN MONEY OF JAMES II.

(9. Shilling—10. Shilling—11. Half-crown—12. Half-crown—13. Half-crown—14. Crown—15. Crown—16. Limerick farthing.)

brass canons now lying in the court of this our castle marked etc. weighing etc. and for soe doeing this shall be your warrant. Given at our court at Dublin-castle, this eleventh day of July, 1689, and in the fifth year of our reign.

To our trusty and wel-beloved
cozen and counsellor Justin Lord
Viscount Mount Cashel, master general
of our ordnance."

This second letter, dealing with the same matter, is also worthy of note :—

"SIR,

We have great occasion for his majesty's use to procure as much hamered or forged copper and brass as your parts can afford, and judging by the decay of trade and desolation of the country, that there may bee a great deale in your district or port, we desire you, by yourself and officers, to inform us presently what quantity you may bee able to furnish us with, and what the currant prices are of each. And whatever you can gett, buy at the best rates you can, and as soon as you have four or five hundred weight pray send it to us the commissioners of his majesty's mint, at the mint-house in Capel-street, Dublin, and what you pay shall bee allowed you in your accounts at the custom house, so doing you'll oblige,

Yours, &c."

A third letter, which we give below, was written

by one of the King's emissaries who, with other trusty servants, was sent out to scour the country for further supplies of metal suitable for coining into gun-money.

"LIMERICK, *Jan. the 4th*, 1689.

SIR,

Last Tuesday, the carriages parted from hence with six thousand six hundred weight of gunn mettle, six hundred a quarter and two pounds of fine pewter, and a thousand weight of steele, they will be eleven or twelve days a goeing because the roads are very deep—The pewter cost ten pence per pound, and steele six pence. You may expect very soone a farther supply of mettle for I have made an agreement with two eminent dealers from Corke who have five or six thousand weight of copper and brass which they are to send here. I must have an order from the lords of the treasury, for sending it to your mint: there are foure or five broken bells in the country, which I can have if you send an order for seizing them for the king's use: there is an useless cannon at Gallway, and one or two at Kingsaile: I forgot to send you some of our coyne as you desired, by the next occasion I will not faile. I cannot buy fine pewter now under eleven or twelve pence the pound, for they say that you give fourteen or fifteen pence in Dublin, the rates for carriage from hence to Dublin is eight shillings the hundred weight.

I rest your humble servant,

WAT PLUNKETT.

To John Trindar Esq."

Summing up James's treatment of the coinage in Ireland, Dr. Nelson says: "Such a debasement of a country's coinage as we have seen above must ever be regarded as a sign of national weakness: also, from the sense of insecurity so engendered, it must inevitably bring disaster in its train, and such a fate overtook the cause of James alike in Ireland and in England. It was doubtless the intention of King James to redeem his gun-money coins, month by month, as opportunity permitted. Circumstances, however, decreed otherwise, as after the Battle of the Boyne he departed for France and was compelled to leave his adherents to their fate." [1]

With the advent of William and Mary, the gun-money of James was re-valued at rates which were practically ruinous to those who held any but small quantities of it. The proclamation ran as follows :—

"Having taken into our consideration the great oppressions and abuses committed by our enemies in this our kingdom of Ireland, by coyning and making currant brass money of copper or mixt metal, and raising the value thereof to an extravagant height, thereby to enable them to continue the war against us, and to impoverish our loving subjects in our said kingdom: We have therefore thought it necessary to put stop thereto, and to the end that such part of the said copper or mix't metal money, which remains in the hands of our said subjects, may not be wholly lost, we have thought fit to

[1] Dr. Nelson, "The Coinage of Ireland in Copper, Tin, and Pewter," p. 24.

reduce the former value of the said copper money, to the value or standard of the like copper money formerly currant in this our kingdom, and accordingly we do hereby will and require all our subjects, within our said kingdom of Ireland, to take and receive all such copper or mix't metal money, lately coined in the mint erected in our city of Dublin, at the several and respective valuations following, and that the same do pass currant in exchange of money, and for all manner of goods and provisions whatsoever, and shall be received by all the officers and collectors of our customs, excise, or other branches of our revenue accordingly, viz.

"The large half-crown of copper money, together with the crown pieces, of like metal and weight, lately stamp'd shall pass at one penny sterling.

"The small half-crown of copper, lately stamp'd shall pass at three farthings.

"The large copper shilling shall pass at a half-penny sterling.

"The small shilling, lately stamped, and sixpence, shall pass each at one farthing.

"And our will and pleasure is, that all such pewter pence, as have been lately coyned in the said mint, shall pass for half-pence, and all the half-pence of the like metal, stamped in the said mint, shall pass currant for farthings.

"Which several sorts of coyn shall be deemed as currant money at the rates before mentioned, in all payments whatsoever within this our kingdom. Given at our camp by Dublin, this tenth day of July, 1690, in the second year of our reign."

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PAPER MONEY OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, 1793.

In the limited space at our disposal, we have not been able to give more than an outline sketch of the various moneys under discussion. The student, however, will find detailed accounts of every coin issued during the Great Rebellion, and later by James II in Ireland, in Dr. Philip Nelson's two most interesting works, (*a*) "The Obsidional Money of the Great Rebellion," and (*b*) "The Copper Coinage of Ireland."

# XVI

# CURIOS MADE BY PRISONERS OF WAR

## CHAPTER XVI

### CURIOS MADE BY PRISONERS OF WAR

Objects recently made in Holland—The Napoleonic prisoners at Norman Cross, Perth, Dartmoor, Stapleton, Liverpool, and Greenland Valleyfield

EVER since the days when enemy soldiers and sailors were first interned for protracted periods of time, it has been a practice for the incarcerated men to while away the tedium by making little odds and ends of things as souvenirs. Their wares are often of extreme interest, as they help us to gain some idea of the class of people who have been interned on particular occasions and the ability and skill they possessed.

At the present moment, objects of no little interest are gradually finding their way into England, which have been made by the men interned in Holland who evacuated Antwerp after its fall, and, no doubt, many will be the treasures which our brave soldiers will bring back with them when they are freed from the concentration camps in Germany. Needless to say, all such curios will be valued by the collector more and more as time rolls on.

In the present chapter, we shall confine our remarks to the handiwork of the French and Spanish prisoners captured during the Napoleonic wars, because sufficient of it has been preserved to engage the attention of the treasure-hunter. One word of caution is necessary, at the outset: such objects are easily counterfeited, and, on this account, must only be bought from reputable people unless documentary proof of genuineness is forthcoming.

The Napoleonic prisoners were quartered in various districts of England, and for many years on end, thus our statements can only be made generally.

The chief settlement was at Norman Cross, near Peterborough, and, though the huge and dingy buildings which served as prisons no longer stand, the place is marked by a cross which was unveiled on July 28, 1914. The craft of the Peterborough prisoners ranked high, as visitors to the local museums will readily acknowledge. Their wares were chiefly made out of the beef-bones left over from their rations. The writer treasures a most exquisitely made set of dominoes carved from bone and ornamented by brush, quill, and knife which came from this settlement. A photograph of the set is given among the illustrations of the present work, but the delicate tracery and the coloured panels of the box have lost much of their charm in the process of reproduction. There is nothing unfinished about the dominoes; each is perfectly squared and the dots are scooped out and coloured with black enamel. When one remembers that the

OBSIDIONAL HALF-FRANC NOTE OF EPERNAY.

OBSIDIONAL FRANC NOTE OF EPERNAY.

tools at the disposal of the workers were few and primitive, their productions must be accepted as truly marvellous. Another example of the work of these men which is worth mentioning is to be seen in the Peterborough Museum; it consists of a miniature bone or perhaps ivory guillotine, perfect in every detail.

Perhaps it will be well to mention that the inhabitants of Peterborough displayed much interest in the Frenchmen's art, and a regular market was held daily within the prison walls from ten to mid-day, whilst history records that as much as two hundred pounds was given in a week for these curios.

At Perth, another of the concentration centres, the products of the prisoners consisted of carved boxes, wooden and bone puzzles, toys and straw-plait goods. Indeed, the skill which the men displayed in this latter class of production was so high that it outclassed all local work of a similar nature. From straw which was dipped in various coloured dyes these clever workmen made tableaux of a most gorgeous nature and framed them with carefully shaped pieces of wood. They also dug up the clay in the courtyards and modelled it into little statuettes of sailors, soldiers, and people of notoriety, whilst they cut pieces from their clothes and worked them into ornamental slippers.

Their ingenuity did not stop here, for they forged bank-notes to while away their tedious hours, and foisted them on to those who came to the prison market. In this matter the following quotation

from the *Perth Courier* of September 19, 1813, is interesting :[1]—

"We are sorry to learn that the forgery of notes of various banks is carried on by prisoners at the Depôt, and that they find means to throw them into circulation by the assistance of profligate people who frequent the market. The eagerness of the prisoners to obtain cash is very great, and as they retain all they procure they have drained the place almost entirely of silver, so that it has become a matter of difficulty to get change of a note.

"Last week a woman coming from the Market at the Depôt was searched by an order of Captain Moriarty, when there was found about her person pieces of base money in imitation of Bank tokens (of which the prisoners are suspected to have been the fabricators), to the amount of £5 17s. After undergoing examination, the woman was committed to gaol."

The Perth prisoners earned for themselves a very bad name, for not only did they counterfeit bank-notes, copies of which are still to be found by collectors, but they fell to all sorts of dishonest practices. A favourite ruse of theirs was to bargain with a customer and then offer to wrap up the goods which were about to change hands. The wrapping-up process was completed out of the unwary purchaser's view, but instead of enclosing the curio they included a lump of clay or piece of wood of similar shape. If the customer came back to complain, the seller was seldom found,

[1] Here quoted from Abell, "Prisoners of War in Britain."

and even when he was discovered it took a deal of threatening and verbal eloquence to obtain redress from the defaulter, whose one security was the iron railings which separated him from the outside world.

The prisoners at Dartmoor also made knick-knacks, but the Governor here forbade the sale of woollen mittens, gloves, straw hats or bonnets, plaited straw, shoes, and articles made out of prison stores.

At Stapleton, outside Bristol, the bootmakers of the neighbourhood complained of the sale of shoes in the prison market. The prison-made article, however, was usually more a thing of ornamentation than of use, and so the bootmakers' complaint seems somewhat unwarranted.

At Liverpool, the Frenchmen made trinkets, crucifixes, card-boxes, toys, snuff-boxes, horsehair rings, and hair watch-chains, using their own hair in the manufacture of the two latter articles.

At the Greenland Valleyfield prison, the making of straw into strawplait was for a while a profitable pastime, as the following passage shows:[1]—

"The employer gave out the straw and paid for the worked article, three sous per 'brasse,' a little under six feet. Some men could make twelve 'brasses' a day. Beaudoin (a sergeant-major of the 31st Line Regiment) set to work at it, and in the course of a couple of months became an adept. After four years came the remonstrance of the country people that this underpaid labour by untaxed men was doing infinite

[1] Abell, "Prisoners of War in Britain," p. 203.

injury to them; the Government prohibited the manufacture and much misery among the prisoners resulted. From this prohibition resulted the outside practice of smuggling straw into the prison and selling it later as the manufactured article; and a very profitable industry it must have been, for we find that, during the trial of Matthew Wingrave in 1813, for engaging in the strawplait trade with the prisoners at Valleyfield, it came out that Wingrave, who was an extensive dealer in the article, had actually moved up there from Bedfordshire on purpose to carry on the trade and had bought cornfields for the purpose."

Thus it is clear that the curios made by prisoners of war embrace a wide range of interesting objects, and that there is much fascination to be had in collecting them. The reader who would know more of the lives, the romances, and the sufferings of these unfortunate men should read Francis Abell's capital book bearing the title "Prisoners of War in Britain."

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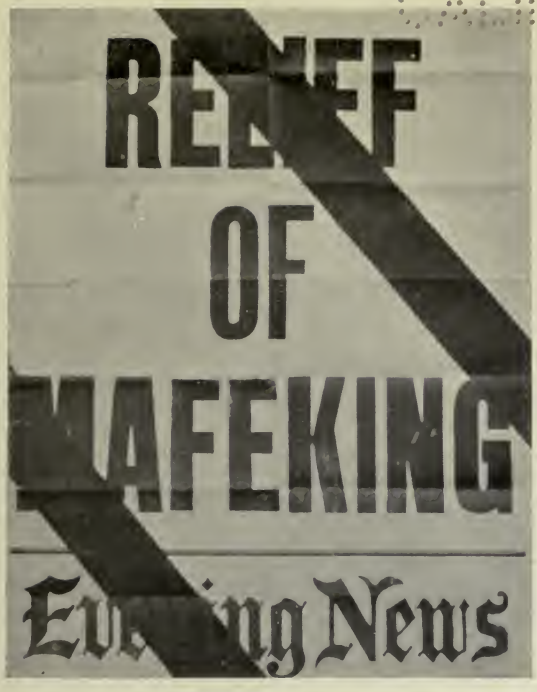


A NEWSPAPER POSTER WHICH TOLD OF WELCOME NEWS.

A SET OF BONE DOMINOES CARVED BY PRISONERS TAKEN IN THE NAPOLEONIC WARS AND INTERNED IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF PETERBOROUGH.

XVII

MISCELLANEOUS
MILITARY
CURIOS

# CHAPTER XVII

## MISCELLANEOUS MILITARY CURIOS

Considerations respecting miscellaneous curios—Battlefield souvenirs—Regimental colours—Odds and ends of dress equipment—Books and newspapers of military interest—Royal souvenirs—Official military documents—Gruesome relics—Relics of the Great War

AMONG the most acceptable military curios are those which may be classed as miscellaneous; they range from fragments of "Black Marias" to chocolate tins, and Prussian helmets to early copies of the Army List. Treasures which come under this head are to be found at almost every turn—in sale-rooms, in the shop windows of second-hand dealers, in cottages and mansions, in local museums—almost everywhere, in fact.

Curiously enough, the military treasures which may be described as miscellaneous are usually to be picked up very cheaply, for there is a much smaller demand for them than there is for such groups of things as medals, firearms, and armour and, of course, the price is regulated by the demand.

There is one axiom which must be always kept in view when purchasing odd military curios. It is not sufficient to know, in our own minds, that a certain

article is genuine ; we must know enough to be able to prove the fact to other collectors or else the "selling-price" value of the treasure will be little more than nothing. Of course, with such things as medals, autographs, weapons, etc., it is merely the work of an expert to say whether a certain specimen is genuine or not, but no amount of careful examination can ever decide the authenticity of a certain souvenir said to belong, perhaps, to Wellington, or the genuineness of a shot which was supposed to have caused the death of such and such a great soldier. Relics of this nature must be backed with good documentary evidence or their value can be but trifling. A case in point may be given by way of an example :—

A soldier recently showed the writer a pocket-knife, bearing the coat-of-arms of Cologne, which he picked up on the battlefield of Ypres. The soldier naturally valued the knife for its associations, but as a military curio its worth was no more than that of a second-hand, much used, pocket-knife since he could in no way prove how he found it.

For the sake of method, we have grouped the miscellaneous curios with which we shall deal under certain heads, the first of which is "Battlefield Souvenirs."

These trophies of war are, of course, full of interest; the present conflict has given us a good many specimens such as Prussian helmets, German infantry caps, and shells of various calibre. They should all be highly prized as long as they are in

good condition and their identity can be established.

There are many interesting battlefield souvenirs to be seen in the Royal United Service Museum. One is the railway-station board from Tel-el-Kebir, which stood in the midst of the fighting on September 13, 1882, when the British, 17,000 strong, attacked and stormed Arabi's entrenchments defended by 22,000 Egyptians.

Another is a leaden ball found on the spot where Major-General James Wolfe received his mortal wound on the Plains of Abraham at the taking of Quebec, 1759.

A third souvenir is a grape shot found on an embankment on the Island of Capri, and believed to have been one of those used by the French in the siege of the island. Capri, it may be said, was held by the British under Sir Hudson Lowe from 1806 to 1808. In the latter year, King Murat of Naples sent a force of French troops, under General Lemarque, to besiege the island, and took it after thirteen days' siege.

Yet another souvenir which may be described as from the battlefield is an officer's memorandum book. Captain F. W. Lyons, of the South Staffordshire Regiment, had this book in his breast-pocket whilst attacking the stockade on the Tumbiling River, in Penang, in 1904, when it was struck by a bullet with no worse result to Captain Lyons than a severe bruise on the chest.

A fifth exhibit is a piece of the gate of Hougomont, which was riddled with bullets during the fighting at Waterloo.

The last to be mentioned here is a gun used in Mafeking during the siege. This gun, so the description added to the exhibit runs, was made in the railway workshops at Mafeking during the siege. The core is a steel steam-pipe, round which were lapped bars of iron, which were hammered and turned into their present condition. The trunnions and breech are castings of brass. For the castings, a blast furnace was improvised out of an iron water-tank lined with fire-bricks, the draught being forced through the pipe of a vacuum brake off a railway carriage.

The shells of the gun were similarly cast, and were loaded with powder, and exploded by a slow match which was ignited by the flame of the discharge. The powder was also manufactured in Mafeking.

On one occasion the breech blew out, and was repaired and fixed with the stout iron holding-bands which may be seen connecting the breech to the trunnion-block. The gun was nicknamed "The Wolf" after Colonel Baden-Powell, whose nickname this was among the people of the North.

**Regimental Colours.**—Under this heading a number of most interesting relics of the battlefield may be grouped. It is true that specimens are never available for the private collector of military curios, but as most cathedrals and many museums possess examples, we cannot pass them over without some mention.

The Royal United Service Museum houses a score or more of these trophies of war, but probably the most attractive are the following:—

1. Drapeau du 52e Régiment, formerly Le Régi-

ment la Fére, formed in 1654, taken at Bastia, 1794. It is one of the earliest French colours known to be in existence. It is white, with a tri-colour of blue, white, and red in the upper canton, showing that it belonged to the 1st Battalion. It has also a tri-colour border of blue, white, and red on either of the three edges.

2. Drapeau des Volontaires du Département de la Corse, 1791–4. Also taken at Bastia in 1794. It is a tri-colour of blue, white, and red, the blue being on the top, and then the colours white and red. On the one side, within a wreath, are the words "Viver, Liber. I. O. Morire," in gold, evidently the Corsican patois for "Je meurs pour vivre libre," and on the reverse "Republica Francese."

3. A guidon of the 62nd Regiment, 1812, taken in Wellington's victory over the French at Salamanca. It was brought home and laid at the feet of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent by Captain Lord Clinton, 16th Light Dragoons, Aide-de-camp to the Earl of Wellington.

4. A quartette of guidons of the 23rd Light Dragoons, circa 1803–15, believed to have led the regiment in its celebrated charge at Talavera in 1809. The regiment was in Anson's brigade, which was ordered by Sir Arthur Wellesley to attack Villatte's Division, and the 23rd, starting at a canter and increasing their speed as they advanced, rode headlong against the enemy, but in a few minutes came upon the brink of a hollow cleft, which was not perceptible at a distance. The regiment plunged down without a check, men and horses rolling over

each other in dreadful confusion. The survivors mounted the opposite bank, by twos and threes, and rallying passed through the midst of Villatte's columns, which poured in a fire from each side, and fell upon a brigade of French chasseurs in the rear. The combat was fierce, but short; for fresh troops came up when the 23rd, already overmatched, could scarcely hold up against the chasseurs. The regiment lost two hundred and seven men and officers, or about half the number that went into action.

The facings of the regiment being crimson the first guidon was, as usual, of that hue. For distinction's sake, though hardly in accordance with the regulations, the other guidons were blue. It is impossible to decide with exact certainty the date when they were made, but probably soon after the regiment was renumbered, in 1803.[1]

**Odds and Ends of Dress Equipment.**—Of curios coming within this class the collector should be able to gather quite an abundance of valuable material, ranging from, say, Royalist powder-flasks to the sashes worn by celebrated soldiers on historic occasions. The Royal United Service Museum, that treasure-house of military curios, has the following interesting exhibits worthy of mention under this head :—

1. The dress worn by Tippoo Sahib, Sultan of Mysore, during the Siege of Seringapatam, in 1799. It is thickly padded with leather, and the head-dress, which has the appearance of green velvet, is in reality a very effective helmet.

[1] The descriptions of these colours are those given with the exhibits.

2. A cavalry cloak which belonged to Captain Nolan, 15th Hussars, who fell in the charge at Balaklava. Captain Nolan was A.D.C. to the Quartermaster-General, when he conveyed to Brigadier-General the Earl of Cardigan the famous order for the Charge of the Light Brigade.

3. An officer's silk sash used in supporting Sir John Moore when carried in a blanket from the battlefield of Corũna to the Citadel after he was mortally wounded on January 16, 1809.

4. A civilian's hat worn by Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Picton, who commanded the Third Division at the Battle of Vittoria, June 21, 1813, when the French army was totally defeated by the allied armies. He wore the civilian head-dress owing to inflammation of the eyes.

5. A saddle used by Field-Marshal Prince Blücher von Wahlstadt at the Battle of Waterloo.

6. An umbrella of King Prempeh, who was taken prisoner by the British troops under Colonel Sir Francis Scott at Coomassie in 1896. The umbrella was presented to Her late Majesty Queen Victoria.[1]

**Books and Newspapers of Military Interest.**—In this class quite a wide range of matter is to be found. Books on military subjects containing fine illustrations, especially when coloured, are always valuable, and if more than seventy or eighty years old are never likely to depreciate in worth. When the illustrations depict army dress or refer to implements of warfare, the books should be especially prized. Volumes having for the subjects the descriptions

[1] The descriptions are those given with the exhibits at the Museum.

LIGHT HORSE VOLUNTEERS,
OF LONDON AND WESTMINSTER.

The Committee of this Corps, considering with serious attention the present critical situation of the Country, and conceiving that every well-wisher to its Constitution and Government would be desirous of affording his individual support at this period, (and particularly should his Majesty's endeavours to conclude a safe and honourable Peace with our enemies prove ineffectual), have thought it proper to make known to the Public the following Abstract of the Rules and Regulations unanimously agreed to by the Corps, viz.—This Corps, instituted in 1779, and revived in 1794, consists, when complete, of 300 Gentlemen, commanded by two Field Officers, six Captains, six Lieutenants, six Cornets, and an Adjutant, chosen from among themselves and commissioned by his Majesty; subject to be called out in case of invasion, appearance of invasion, or insurrection, and to do duty in the metropolis only, or within the distance of ten miles.

When not on actual service, all matters are regulated by a Committee of twelve Privates and nine Officers; and in case of death or resignation, a private may be elected to any rank in the corps.

The first expence for uniforms, arms, accoutrements and horse furniture, does not amount to 30l. and the annual subscription is only ten guineas, which may be considered as amply compensated by the following advantages:—

Every gentleman is taught riding, fencing, and the sword exercise on horseback by the best masters, in the pay of the corps.

He is exempted from the Militia, the tax for one horse, and the powder tax (if he chuses to avail himself of that privilege), and also the ballot for the proposed supernumerary Militia and Cavalry.

His horse is broke and kept in constant exercise at the stables of the corps (should he prefer sending him there), where he stands at less expence than at livery.

There are no expensive meetings, and the attendance at such as are occasionally appointed by the Committee, is always optional.

The corps is composed in general of men of extensive business, and the hours of exercise are regulated in such a manner as seldom to prove of any inconvenience.

It is only necessary to attend the drills till a certificate of being fit for duty is obtained from the commanding officer.

The civil and military regulations of the corps more at large may be perused by applying to the Secretary, or any Gentleman of the Committee.

*No. 194, Strand,* By Order,
*Nov. 8, 1796.* EDW. HUGHES, *Sec.*

A CUTTING FROM *THE TIMES* OF NOVEMBER 9, 1796,

which is of much interest, as it shows that problems of recruiting were just as difficult of solution a century and a quarter ago as they are to-day.

of battles or accounts of tactics are, however, not sought for, as a rule. The Army List must not be forgotten. Early copies—the first appeared in 1814—are eagerly snapped up whenever offered for sale—as many soldiers of rank endeavour to secure complete sets of them.

Newspapers containing news of special military interest are worth obtaining. The issues of *The Times* which tell of the successes of Trafalgar and Waterloo are notoriously valuable, but the reprinted copies must not be mistaken for the original leaflets. There is, of course, no need to confine one's collection to copies of *The Times*. In this matter, the news contained by the journal is more to be considered than the dignity of the journal itself.

**Royal Souvenirs.**—In the time of Waterloo the soldier in the ranks received few of the little considerations which we now feel are the hero's just reward. Tommy was paid for his work and there the matter ended. To-day, however, the position has changed. We, who stay at home, can hardly think enough of those who are fighting our battles: such is the spirit shown by every one from the King down to the humblest citizen living within the realm. With such a feeling abroad it is not to be wondered at that members of the Royal Family have, in recent times, made little presents to our fighting men, knowing full well how much the recipients will treasure them. Under this heading we may mention the Queen Victoria chocolate tin which the late Queen gave to soldiers in the Boer War, the chocolate or tobacco tin which Princess

Mary presented, full of good things, to the soldiers during Christmas, 1914, and lastly the Christmas card which the King and Queen sent to the fighting men on land and sea at the same festive season. These and all such souvenirs are, of course, to be highly prized by the collector.

**Official Military Documents.**—Undoubtedly a good many documents of a military bearing are to be found if collectors only know where to search for them. The more important papers, such as plans of battlefields and commanders' messages, are naturally prized by those who own them, but there is a wide field for the collector among the documents of lesser importance. Within this class we should include all kinds of official correspondence, passports to enter fortified towns, passes to enable journalists to penetrate beyond certain lines, and proclamations, printed and otherwise. It will thus be seen that the scope of the collection is almost without limit.

A good many treasures coming under this head are to be found in the Whitehall museum, already spoken of. Two are worthy of special notice. The first is a pass issued to Lieutenant J. Whiteley, 9th Foot, when a French prisoner of war at Verdun, dated December 30, 1812. It runs as follows :—

"PLACE DE VERDUN.

*Permission de Sortir de la Place.*

Il est permit à Mr. Whitley, Prisonnier de Guerre de sortir de la Place par les portes, Chaussée de Metz, à condition de rentrer chaque jour avant leur fermeture.

La présente permission est pour lui seul. Verdun, 30 Decembre, 1812.

Le Commandant du dépôt des Prisonniers de Guerre Anglais."

(*Signature illegible.*)

The above is interesting in so much as it enables us to gather that those who were unfortunate enough to be taken prisoner by the French were treated as men of honour and with as few irksome restrictions as possible. The second treasure is a map of the theatre of war (the Waterloo Campaign, 1815) saturated with the blood of Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Picton, who was killed during the battle. The map was taken from the pocket of his coattee on the following morning by his servant, Henry Barnes.

So far we have marshalled our curios under certain more or less convenient headings, but some of them refuse all attempts at classification; they are no less attractive on this account, however.

Were we to reserve a space for gruesome relics, the following exhibit, to be seen in the Royal United Service Museum, would certainly deserve mention. It is the King of Ashanti's execution bowl, which formed part of the spoils taken from Prempeh by the expedition under Colonel Sir Francis Scott in 1896. The bowl, which is of brass, resembles an ordinary bath-tub in appearance and size, and is about five feet in diameter. On the rim are four small lions and a number of knobs, evidently intended as an ornamentation, and would appear to be of Moorish origin.

There is a gap in the continuity of knobs to allow a space for the victim to insert his neck preparatory to execution. The bowl was fully described by Bowdich in his account of Ashanti in 1817. Coomassie, where the bowl was taken, means the City of Death ; it possessed three places of execution—one at the palace for private executions, one on the parade ground for public executions, and a third, named Bantama, where the bowl was found, for fetish sacrifices. Any great public occasion was seized upon as an excuse for human sacrifice, such as the harvest festival, at which large numbers of victims were offered.

The King also went every quarter to pay homage to the shade of his ancestors at Bantama, and on each occasion the death of twenty men over the great bowl was demanded. The blood of the victims was allowed to putrefy in the bowl, the leaves of certain herbs being added; it was considered a very valuable fetish medicine. King Prempeh was accustomed to watching the sacrifices seated in a chair with the Queen-Mother seated on a stool on his left, being sheltered from the sun by a large umbrella.[1]

Before concluding this chapter on miscellaneous curios, it may be well to give a list of suggested objects, bearing on the Great War, which might be reasonably included in a collection of war mementoes and relics :—

Blue-books and similar official correspondence, both British and foreign. Copies of newspapers containing accounts of the outstanding incidents of

[1] "Museum Catalogue," p. 49.

The PERPETUAL ALMANACK
Or. GENTLEMAN SOLDIER'S PRAYER BOOK.

AN INTERESTING BROADSIDE PRINTED AT THE FAMOUS CATNACH PRESS, BEING ONE OF A SERIES DESCRIBING INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF A SOLDIER.

the war. Photographs of the greater events, i.e. the sinking of the *Blücher*. Recruiting posters. Posters describing hostile and friendly aircraft. Printed proclamations. Letters from soldiers at the front. War postage stamps, including the various Red Cross stamps. The King and Queen's Christmas card to the soldiers. Princess Mary's chocolate box. Various kinds of ammunition used by the Allies and the enemy. Aeroplane darts. Permits given to journalists to enter the various battle zones. Official stamps of the Press Censor. Cartoons from *Punch*. Paper money issued owing to the hostilities. Portions of uniforms, i.e. Prussian helmets, buttons and badges of British and foreign soldiers. Souvenirs made by interned soldiers. Toys constructed by Belgian refugees, and composite flags made by combining the devices of the various allies.

XVIII

# A HISTORY OF ONE'S COLLECTION

# CHAPTER XVIII

## A HISTORY OF ONE'S COLLECTION

Reasons for compiling a history of one's collection—The part played by photographs—Armour suggested as an example—Material for grangerizing

IN this concluding chapter we have a suggestion to make to the collector of ample leisure moments; briefly, it is that he should draw up a history of his treasures. Such a work has many valuable advantages; first, it helps to co-ordinate the pieces which our collection contains; second, it provides work of a fascinating nature; third, it leads us to hunt through books and collections and so increases our knowledge; and fourth, it provides us with a kind of catalogue of our treasures which should prove of value for insurance and other purposes of identification.

Collectors of most kinds of curios are able to keep their specimens in methodical array. The philatelist, for instance, preserves his stamps within the covers of one or more albums; the print-lover places his pictures in portfolios, whilst the china-collector uses a cabinet for housing his treasures. The collector of military curios, however, cannot adopt any of these

methodical arrangements, for it is impossible to assemble, we will say, armour, postage stamps, medals, and badges with any pretence of order. This is where the history of one's collection steps in; it describes the pieces and explains where each is to be found.

The first stage in making such a history consists in procuring photographs or well-executed drawings of every specimen in our collection. Photographs are, of course, much more useful than drawings, and as nearly every house boasts of a camera nowadays the former should not be hard to obtain.

The prints should be mounted in a loose-leaf album, the pages of which must be much larger than the prints. Mounting may be performed in many ways, but it will be well to use a photographic paste, to use it sparingly, and to paste the whole of the backs of the prints.

The third step consists in adding written matter under and around the prints. This data should describe not only the article portrayed, that is to say, its use, its sequence among other similar things, its composition, and so on, but also where and how it was personally obtained, what was paid for it, and in what particular place it is kept.

Personally, we do not think that a history should be limited to an account of the pieces figuring in our collection, but that a welcome should be extended to brief descriptions, both written and pictorial, of specimens which we hope to obtain as well as interesting specimens which we can never hope to

obtain owing to their unique condition. The wider history will prove more complete and, therefore, more valuable; it will also serve as an indicator of the things which we do not yet possess but which are procurable by the average collector.

By way of an example, let us say that the reader has a small collection of armour and weapons and that he proposes to draw up a history of these interesting objects. The first thing would be to photograph each of the specimens in his collection and to mount them in an album as described above. Naturally, there would be many periods unrepresented in the collection, and pictures of these he should endeavour to find among the magazines and books that are available. As a discovery is made it should be carefully cut out and added to the history. Of course, when an additional piece of armour or a weapon is procured, its photograph should replace any print of a similar article which may already figure in the album.

The grangerite, for such is the name given to a person who creates a history on these lines, is often spoken of as one who mutilates valuable books to give birth to a volume of his own. We may say at once that we do not suggest that mutilation of any kind should be countenanced. The grangerite who needs extra-illustrations can find material, in abundance, for his work in all sorts of quarters without tearing prints from volumes of worth. The old book-shop with its penny boxes and print portfolios provides all the pictures that are necessary in the ordinary way

whilst back numbers of *The Connoisseur* are veritable gold-mines when representations of any kind of curio are needed.

But the grangerite must learn to search for material in all sorts of unexpected quarters. Armour, in many cases, adorns the heroes which grace our public statues in London (e.g. the Black Prince at Westminster), therefore, he should procure picture post-cards of such monuments. Again, many coins bear allegorical figures which include arms and armour in various forms. In this matter it is worth mentioning that the British Museum has on sale a large stock of picture post-cards depicting the coins reposing in its galleries. These, of course, the grangerite should procure. Lastly, we may mention that royal seals, church brasses, and even postage stamps often portray the warrior in shining armour and are worth noting by the grangerite.

Such, in outline, is the task of drawing up a history of one's collection. The work is fascinating and the *magnum opus*, when perfected, is of considerable value. Need more be said?

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